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BEHRAMJI M MALABARI

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

BY

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ACTING DISTRICT JUDGE, SHIKARPUR

WITH

INTRODUCTION

BY

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE

O Father, touch the East, and light
The light that shone when Hope was born

TENNYSON'S "In Memoriam"

London

T. FISHER UNWIN

PATERNOSTER SQUARE

MDCCCXCII

To the

NOBLE ENGLISHWOMEN

WHO HAVE DONE SO MUCH

TO MAKE MALABARI'S MISSION A SUCCESS

THIS BOOK IS

Respectfully Dedicated

INTRODUCTION.

THE most interesting portions of this book are those which give us a peep into an Indian home—that of Mr. Malabari and his family, revealing the life of the young reformer; his aspirations; the weakness and the strength of his character; the influence of women on his youthful training; his devotion to their cause in after life. We see how much he owed to his mother, a remarkable woman, of strong will, masterful mind, and irresistible energy; yet a simple, homely housewife, with the tenderest heart. She said: "All the boys in the street are my own sons," when, for her own son, thought to be dying, a specific was pressed upon her which would have injured another boy.

The mother's influence in India is so great

that in truth it moulds the character of the nation. Of this influence Mr. Malabari is an instance in point. His mother transmitted to him, by inheritance and example, many of her characteristic qualities; amongst them a keen susceptibility, and the power of patient endurance. The sympathy existing between mother and son determined the choice of his work in life, and devoted him to the service of his countrywomen.

The mission which he led against infant-marriage has, no doubt, stirred up a strong feeling of hostility in some quarters. But on reading this book it will be seen that much of that hostility has arisen from a misunderstanding of his objects and methods, and that it is only a temporary feeling, which will subside when the excitement has calmed down: the evils he has attacked will be acknowledged to be those which most endanger the physical and moral well-being of the Indian race. It will be seen that if he has offended by the vehemence of his advocacy, that vehemence has been caused by a just indignation and by an intense sympathy with the Indian people, especially with the weakest and most

suffering classes. His work as a reformer of Indian social life cannot fail to set Englishmen, and especially Englishwomen, thinking of their duty towards their Indian brethren and sisters. We Englishwomen understand as little the lives and circumstances, the ideas and feelings, of these hundred millions of women of India as if they lived in another Planet. They are not reached by us, not even by those of us who have lived in powerful positions in India. Yet the women of India possess influence the most unbounded. In their own households, be it in hut or palace, even though never seen, they hold the most important moral strongholds of any women on earth. Did not a well-known Indian gentleman declare that it was easier to defy the Secretary of State than to defy one's own mother-in-law? Supported by ancient custom, Indian women are absolute within their sphere.

How may we hope to reach this great influence, and utilize it for the cause of social progress? The answer seems to be that the women of India *can only* be reached by educated ladies of their own country—ladies

of pure life and enlightened enthusiasm in doing good. They have ready access to their poorer sisters—*they* understand their circumstances and feelings. It is to *them*, therefore, that we must appeal to convince their countrywomen, by example and precept, of the evils of the present marriage system, and to suggest the remedy. They can prevail, we cannot. But what we *can* do is earnestly to support and strengthen the educated Indian ladies who have already entered on the path of social progress. To them we Englishwomen must look in the first instance for instruction, and with them lies the power effectually to carry out this perhaps the greatest reform the world has yet seen.

PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION.



This sketch was first published in 1888, under the title of "The Life and Life-Work of Behramji M. Malabari," with selections from his writings and speeches on Infant Marriage and Enforced Widowhood, and with his "Rambles of a Pilgrim Reformer." Having been advised to bring out a second edition of the sketch, I have taken the opportunity to add considerable new matter, which will be mainly found under the headings, "Early Reminiscences," "Early Associates," "Early Aspirations," "Father Peepal, Alchemy and Magic," and "Malabari's Creed." I have also brought down the history of the Social Reform movement in India after the passing of the Age of Consent Bill.

The net proceeds of this booklet will be kept in trust for a Social Reform Mission, which is about to be organized in India.

1891.

PREFACE.

MEN of originality are apt to be misunderstood. While some consider Malabari sufficiently enthusiastic to be a "Western Reformer," there are others who, utterly ignorant of the almost ascetic life he leads, have dubbed him "a Luther of rose and lavender." It occurred to me that a plain unvarnished narrative of his career was likely to do good, and I therefore induced Malabari to permit me to publish what I knew about it.

I also thought that a selection from his writings and speeches on the Hindu Social Reform question would be welcome to all interested in it. It seemed an anomaly that while the opinions elicited by his writings should be before the public in two bulky volumes, the writings themselves should lie

scattered in the files of the *Indian Spectator*. It was no part of my plan to publish all his writings on the subject, and this volume contains only what appeared to me to be worth preserving.

The net proceeds of this book, should there be any, will be set apart as a nucleus of a fund to be handed over to any Social Reform Association or Mission which the educated Hindus might organize. It is sad to see that, in spite of so much talk about social reform from within, during the past three years and a half, nothing has yet been done to create a machinery for carrying out such reform. The creation of such machinery means self-sacrifice, and self-sacrifice ought certainly to be the distinguishing characteristic of all really educated men. I trust they may still fulfil the just expectations of all our well-wishers, and found a National Association, equipped with even larger funds than the Countess of Dufferin's Association, and sustained by a genuine unselfish missionary spirit, without which there is no hope for India.

1888.

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BOYHOOD (1853–1866).

"My boast is not that I deduce my birth
From loins enthroned, and rulers of the earth;
But higher far my proud pretensions rise,
The son of parents pass'd into the skies."

Cowper.

"Howe'er it be, it seems to me,
'Tis only noble to be good.
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood."

Tennyson.

CHAPTER I.

BOYHOOD (1853–1866).

Malabari's Father and Adoptive Father.

The name of Malabari's father was Dhanjibhai Mehta. He was a poor clerk in the service of the Gaekwar of Baroda, on a salary of Rs. 20. I know nothing more about him than that he was a mild, peace-loving man, with a somewhat feeble constitution and not overmuch force of character. Malabari lost him at the age of six or seven.

Malabari's adoptive father was Merwanji Nanabhai Malabari. He was a relation of Malabari's maternal grandmother, had consigned two wives already to the Towers of Silence at Surat, was in 1856 about fifty years old, and in easy circumstances. He had a large druggist's shop, and was an importer of sandalwood, sugar, scents and spices from the

Malabar Coast—hence his surname Malabari. He had no issue, and therefore thought fit to adopt the child who has made his family name famous throughout India, and favourably known even in Europe and America. Merwanji also married the boy's mother—a union she accepted from a sense of filial duty, and which turned out very unhappy.

Merwanji is not highly spoken of. A few years after his adoption of little Behram, a serious misfortune fell upon him. A country vessel bringing an uninsured cargo for him from the Malabar Coast sank in the sea, and Merwanji was reduced to great straits. He had to cut down his business and take to humbler pursuits, practising for some time as a sort of Hakim.* This latter accomplishment he had been in the habit of exercising even in his palmy days, but now it became a source of a small income which was exceedingly welcome. His adopted son had often to do a great deal of pounding and pulverising for him in both the branches of his calling, the Hakim's and the druggist's, and at the age of twelve was able to bring him 10 or 12

* Native doctor.

rupees a month, besides keeping his accounts and assisting him generally. The first concern of the young man when he came to Bombay was to redeem the family house, which had been mortgaged for Rs. 300; but the money was not forthcoming for a long time, and when it was, the house could not be redeemed, the mortgage having been foreclosed. The mortgagee seems to have borne a grudge to Merwanji's next-door neighbour, and as soon as he was master of the house had it pulled down in order to make the neighbour's house shelterless. For the same reason he refused to sell the plot for any consideration, or to build on it. An eccentric man this! I do not know what provocation he had received. Let us hope it was not as bad as his retaliation.

Merwanji passed his latter days in peace. He died about nine years ago.

MALABARI'S MOTHER.

Malabari owes a great deal more to his mother than either to Dhanjibhai or to Merwanji. For Bhikhibai was no ordinary woman. Rather undersized, like her son—

with the same light brown complexion, but a rounded face and large almond-like eyes, she was a homely humble housewife, handy at all kinds of domestic work—an expert in cookery, a deft-fingered sempstress, and a first-rate nurse. She had what her husband lacked—a strong will, a masterful mind, and an irrepressible energy. With these she combined a tenderness for the poor—she was one of them—and a large-heartedness not rare in her sex. She had truly

> "A tear for pity, and a hand
> Open as day for melting charity."

She was often to be seen in the sick-room of her neighbours, Hindu or Parsi, with little Behram toddling behind her, or holding on to the skirts of her simple sari. She knew many of those well-tried herbs which bring almost instant relief to ailing children, and her skill was seldom exerted in vain. She was freely consulted by the women in her street in their troubles. What was most admirable in her was her catholicity and impulsive unerring goodness. I know of no Hindu woman who

would care to tend, far less to suckle, a gasping little waif lying in a basket near her house, without first inquiring to what caste it belonged. But Bhikhibai did such a thing one day, though she had to brave a scandal, for the waif turned out to be the street scavenger's child. It was a very small infant, and so weak that one would be almost afraid to handle it. But the good woman at once yielded to her first impulse when she heard it moaning piteously, and taking it up tenderly, put it to her breast. Its mother came up shortly afterwards, and relieved our heroine of her charge. But Bhikhibai had a bad time of it for several days with her Parsi neighbours.* Still, few could help loving this utterly unselfish woman, and when she died she was sincerely mourned by all who had known her. Her memory remains embalmed in her son's poetic tributes of affection.

Early Reminiscences.

"I was about two," writes Malabari to me,

* This incident forms the subject of a poem in Malabari's "Indian Muse in English Garb." It is headed "Nature triumphant over Caste." The merit of the act is given to a Hindu widow.

"when my mother had to leave Baroda. She and her elder sister had been married, respectively, to two brothers. I am told that my aunt was as strong-willed as my mother; and my uncle, senior to my father, was as mild and peace-loving as the latter. The result was that the two sisters, now *jethání* and *deráni* * also, had frequent differences. My mother, like her mother-in-law, still remembered for her kindliness, made friends with the Hindu neighbours, tended them and their children in sickness, paid them visits of condolence, even took part in their post-funeral ceremony, called *pátharnu*. My good aunt thought this to be *infra dig.*, and scolded her younger sister. My grandmother, Dinbai, who loved my mother dearly, took her part; but as she had retired from the command of the household, my aunt had everything pretty much her own way. My mother stood the persecution for a time; she appealed to her husband, who, being the younger brother, could not do more than say to his wife, 'be patient for my sake.' But if my

* *Jethani* or *jeshtáni* means the wife of the elder brother; *deráni*, the wife of the younger.

aunt had a will, so had my mother. One night, after consulting her mother-in-law and other friends, probably with their aid, she set out for Surat, with me, in a hay-cart. There was no railway in Gujarat in those days, and the road-sides of the district were infested by Bhil robbers. But my mother risked this and the 'talk of the town' rather than put up with the waywardness of her *jethâni* sister. She used to tell me, in after years, how she concealed herself and me under the hay, how about Nowsari the cart attracted a gang of robbers, how they swooped down upon us, how she pinched me to make me cry (the only time in her life) in order to excite pity, how I declined to cry, how the old headman of the gang took me in his arms and proclaimed peace, saying it was only a girl and a baby in the cart, how my mother volunteered to cook *khichri* * for the robbers whilst I was playing with them, and the faithful cartman was preparing *bhang*,† how the robbers were completely won over, and

* A dish of rice and peas mixed.

† A preparation of *cannibus Indicus*, much in favour with freebooters, highwaymen, and other desperadoes.

how they sent a small escort with us to the outer gate of Surat, to see us safe in, with some presents for myself and my mother. As a boy of five I used to have this narrative repeated to me by my mother whenever I was ill, after which we both of us prayed to God.

"Our return to my mother's birthplace was very ominous—she was never happy thenceforth. Fire, flood, domestic bereavements and differences — all these aggravated her troubles—and finally, to help me to a decent sort of life, but more to oblige her parents, she remarried. This marriage was a disastrous failure. But she put up with it for my sake, though I gained little and lost much by an undesirable contact. Her own life was a daily martyrdom, except when we two were left together. What a mother mine was! A picture of self-sacrifice. Some people live to die; others are prepared to die, so that they may live. My mother was one of these. She died at thirty-three, but still she lives in the memory of many who knew her. To me she has been, and will be, alive always. How can a mother die? There is an aroma of immortality about the word and the idea it clothes.

Firdousi sings of Rustom having carried the dead bones of his son Sorab round his neck in a string, to remind him of his irreparable loss. I carry my mother about in the spirit. She is always present to me. In every good woman I see my mother; I pity every bad or ill-used woman for my mother's sake.

"Besides our natural relations, my mother and I were the dearest friends on earth. This was due partly to her intense affection, partly to our common misfortune, and partly to her simplicity of heart which never allowed her to assert her rights as a parent. It was owing to this latter, I believe, that we lived a life of perfect friendship and confidence. My mother taught me singing, for all occasions that a Parsi or Hindu family has to face, from birth to death. She taught me cookery, sewing, preparing domestic medicines, nursing, &c. We sometimes used to be visited by a cousin named Rati, a terrible tomboy, who poked fun at her poor husband and drove him away from Surat, in order that she might lead a 'free manly life,' as she put it. We used to have jolly times at home when my stepfather was out money-grubbing. We would have

primitive concerts—Rati playing on a brass vessel and I singing quaint old songs. We would have plays and games of all sorts. Rati would become a thief and I a constable, with my mother for a magistrate. I would bully the thief, caught red-handed; and Rati, who was a clever actor, would blubber and sit down pouting and suing for mercy. I would whip her up to the magistrate, when she would faint—at which, forgetting my constabulary dignity, I would fling myself on her and assure her it was *all play*. The girl would then tease me for a greenhorn, and say I could not sustain a part. At other times I would undertake the part of the thief, with Rati for the constable. She would catch me at it in a minute, and lay it about rather briskly. I would put up with that rather than be dragged before the magistrate, in which case my mother would come out of her room and explain that a thief is none the less of a thief because he has not been brought up to the court; that he who *thinks* of stealing is as much a thief as he who actually steals, and that if he evades a human magistrate he cannot evade the Divine Magistrate. At other times they would dress me up

as schoolmaster—turban, spectacles, the rod of office, and all—and sit down at my feet, taking their lessons as mildly as the fierce scolding I gave them for laziness, want of attention, and so on. Rati would sometimes dress like a soldier and strut up to the neighbouring houses, demanding eggs, cheese, and other eatables in the name of the Sirkar.* At other times she would dress like a Parsi corpse-bearer (with an ordinary Parsi hat, and the hair hanging loose behind), and would ask superstitious housewives, 'Who is dead in this house?' The poor women, sick at the sight, would propitiate our *Nasisalar* with presents, and beg he would never visit them again. Rati's pranks were endless. Even my step-father stood in awe of her, leaving the house whenever she chanced to be there. That was nearly thirty years ago. You will be glad to hear that Rati is to-day an exemplary wife and mother. How completely one's character changes at times! She honours and obeys the same husband whom she used to chaff. I have not met her all these years, but she writes to me now and then.

* The Government.

"Though uneducated, my mother was not a superstitious woman, as most of her sex were in those days. The only time I remember her having yielded to a superstitious dread, and that in a very small way, was when I was taken ill with small-pox. It was a serious and complicated case, and recovery was considered almost hopeless. Vaids and Hakmis * were consulted, but they gave little hope. One of these, a Hindu astrologer and man of medicine, told my mother, who was frantic with grief, that the only way of saving my life was by cutting off the live nails and eyebrows of a neighbour's son, to be dedicated to the goddess of small-pox. This practice was prevalent at Surat, and boys and girls used to be disfigured, and even killed by selfish parents. My mother listened to the astrologer, and then begged him to suggest something else. She would never do harm to another boy who was as dear to his mother as I was to her. Dearly as she loved me, and knowing that my death would mean her own, she yet held out. She asked the astrologer to consider the cruel position in which he sought to

* Hindu and Mahomedan doctors of the indigenous schools.

place her. All the boys in the street were her own sons. Would it please God to do harm to her one son in order to save another? She could not understand the proposal. Anything but that, or *Khudáni marji*, God's will. She was willing to pay, to suffer anything herself. The old astrologer then prescribed an alternative — so many silver images of the goddess of small-pox, to be placed beside a light which must be kept burning constantly in the room, the mother of the patient to keep vigils night and day, have no food save parched rice once a day, the patient to be kept on milk only, and the front wall of the room to be decorated (?) with a figure of the dread *Sitlá Mátá*,* before which prayers and supplications were to be offered twice a day by my mother and friends. On recovery the silver images were to be given to the astrologer, with sundry other 'dues,' and goats and fowl were to be sacrificed at the shrine of *Sitlá Mátá* outside the city gate. My poor mother accepted this proposal, and carried it out to the letter; she practically starved herself for a fortnight. For me it

* The goddess of small-pox.

was a truly miserable time, except when Rati or her brother came in, unknown to the father, for a game or a chat, or when mother had done praying, and would lead me into fairy-land, or soothe me to slumber by a thrilling recital of the renunciation of Gopichand Raja." *

First Lessons in Praying and Weaving.

Little Behram was finally weaned some time after he was sent to school. This may sound curious, but it is a fact. He was the only solace of his mother, and she loved him as only such a mother could love. The boy was fond, too fond of his mother's milk—and he has too much of it in him. He would cling to her breast even after returning from school; and his school, I am afraid, was not a particularly pleasant one. The schoolmaster was believed to have been a centenarian, for he had taught not only old Merwanji but Merwanji's father also. His son was a greybeard, and it must have been a sight to see this patriarchal family assembled at their meals. Our "old

† One of the most popular ballads, sung in almost all the vernaculars of India.

Antiquity's " name was Minochehr Daru. He sat in a small room with about twenty little Parsi boys, among whom was our Behram. He held a mighty long elastic bamboo cane in his hand, which worked quite like an automaton, and could put a girdle round the little flock in less than a second. It is a venerable face, Minochehr's, but his eyes are " awful." His limbs are rather stiff, and he cannot move about freely; so he has a comfortable seat, which he seldom leaves, especially as his wiry cane does everything for him. It is his dainty Ariel in a way, though he has, unlike Prospero, not a library full of magical lore, but a common, primitive, humdrum loom, and the boys have to weave as well as to pray: our schoolmaster does not teach out of the educational primer, but the Parsi prayer-book. As soon as all the boys have mustered, after doing some domestic drudgery in Minochehr's house, and the threads have been ranged lengthwise, the veteran centenarian is out with his monotonous sing-song, and you hear twenty little throats repeating at the top of their voice the sacred formula *Ashem Vohu*,* the

* This celebrated formula has been variously translated. My friend, Mr. Navroji Dorabji Khandalevala, has discussed the

master and his favourite disciples plying their shuttles at the same time. The little ones do not know what these mysterious words mean, or that scholars have differed about their meaning. They only know that any mistake made in following their dominie means a taste of that tingling ubiquitous cane, and they have a salutary dread of it. In this way Behram learned to make pretty little wefts out of warp and woof and to mumble the mystic words of "Ahuno Vairyo*" and "Ashem Vohu" and such others. Before we take leave of Minochehr Daru, we might as well read a little sketch of this worthy by Malabari himself:—

various meanings, and come to the conclusion that the right translation is as follows:—"Purity is the best good, a blessing it is, blessing to him who (practises) purity for the sake of the Highest purity." (*Vide* "Primitive Mazdayasnyan Teachings," p. 18.)

* There is more conflict regarding the meaning of this formula than that of "Ashem Vohu." Mr. Khandalevala's translation is as follows: "As is the Will or (Law) of the Eternal Existence so (its) Energy solely through the Harmony (Asha) of the perfect mind is the producer (Dazda) of the manifestation of the Universe and (is) to Ahura Mazda (the Living Wise one) the power which gives sustenance to the revolving systems." The accomplished and genial Bishop Meurin gives another rendering of this most ancient formula, and establishes a common origin between "Ahuno Vairyo" and one of the oldest Christian prayers.

"White flowing beard, small chirping voice,
White white his all, but red his blinking eyes.
A man mysterious of the Magus tribe—
A close astrologer, and a splendid scribe—
A faithful oracle of dread Hormuzd's will—
A priest, a patriarch, and a man of skill.
A master weaver, and—to close details,
He weaved long webs and Lord! he weaved long tales.
Hard murd'rous words, that wisdom's lips defied,
Would thick portentous from his nozzle glide.
And here we stuck, tho' long and hard we tried;
He cursed, and caned by turns, we hummed and cried.
This could not last; our mutual failings seen,
He left his preaching, and we left our dean.*

First Lessons in Gujarati.

Behram's next teacher was Narbheram, a nephew of Jivanram Mehtaji, who was then a well-known astrologer and mathematician. Here is a picture by Malabari of his little school, which was quite a curiosity in its way.

"I am not 'the oldest man living.' But it may surprise the oldest man living to know something of my first school and earliest school-days. What a marvellous improvement is 1885 upon 1860 in matters educational! And yet it would be scarcely fair to call the change an *improvement* in all respects.

* "Indian Muse," p. 82.

Let the reader judge for himself. My first school was just behind our house at Nanpura, Surat, and Narbheram Mehtaji was my first teacher. He was a Bhikhshuka Brahman—tall, majestic and taciturn, the sort of man who inspires awe by his Shiva-like habits. In his nature, as in name, he was truly a Nirbhaeram *—fearless and fear-inspiring. He made a most efficient teacher. The school was a commodious little shop, with the floor strewn over with street dust and an elevated square for the master. On the square squatted the master and on the floor squatted his flock, Hindu and Parsi. There was no fee to be paid for the instruction—only a handful of grain, a few flowers or some fruit now and then. There were no tables nor benches, nor slates nor pencils, nor books nor maps; not one single item of the literary paraphernalia of the modern schoolroom. Each pupil had a wooden board, *pati*, which served him for slate, and a pointed stick, *lekhana*, which he used as pencil. He also carried with him a rag. With this piece of cloth he sifted the dust over the board, and on that bed

* *Nirbhae* means fearless.

he traced figures and numerals, wrote letters, petitions, &c. This task work was submitted every noon to the master, who held a rod in his hand, with one end pointed. Glancing over the dust work, he would now give a grunt of satisfaction, and strike the board with the pointed end of his stick. The figures of dust would at once disappear, and so would the lucky pupil—for lunch. If, unluckily, the task was badly done, Narbheram would apply the butt end of the rod to the pupil, instead of to his board, often gently, sometimes heavily too. The pupil was condemned for the day. There were worse methods, of course, the sharp and supple cane, the thong, the pebble under the knee, the stone across the shoulders, the twisting of the nose, the shaking by the neck or by a knot made with the delinquent's *topi*,* or *chotli*.† Worse still, sometimes the little urchin was swung across the beam, and at times stripped of his scanty dress. Oh the tortures of the mid-day ordeal! How my heart sank within me as I crawled up to the master's *gadi*! ‡ Life or death—what was it

* Cap. † Tuft of hair in the centre of the head.
‡ Cushion.

to be? I died on an average two deaths a month. That was because I was too small to deserve attention, quite a beginner. Besides, was not Narbheram's uncle and patron, Jivanram the one-eyed, the famous mathematician, astrologer and match-maker, a particular friend of my foster-father's? But for all that, whenever Narbheram condescended to notice me, he did it heartily. I have not yet forgotten his heaviness of hand and ferocity of looks. What added to the misery of the situation was the inviolable silence on both sides. It was something like a struggle between the lion and the mouse, the one too proud to roar, the other too timid even to squeak.

"But to return to the schoolroom. The written work was gone through in the forenoon. Everything was done on a versified system. The numerals were drawled out in versified form. The different processes—addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, were gone through in the same manner. Rigid accuracy was enforced throughout. The system of multiplication was elaborate to a degree. Integers and fractions were alike

treated from the minutest to the most magnificent scale.

"The boy was expected to say by rote the ¼, the ½, the ¾, the 1¼, the 1½, the 2½, and 3½, of any number up to 100. These were respectively called *paya*, *ardha*, *pauna*, *savaya*, *dohda*, *adhiya*, and *utha*. A good deal of this system was gone through by the boys on their boards in the forenoon, and verbally in the afternoon. The dux of a group was now and then challenged by the dux of another group, the master arbitrating. ¼th of 95, 3½ of 79, ¾ of 65?—the questions had to be answered no sooner than they were asked. And woe be to the poor wight who halted or made a slip. Like the fractions came the integers up to 100×100. Thus, *Pachi pachiram chha pachisa* (25×25=625), and so on, from 1×1=1 up to 100×100 =10,000. The process was a powerful aid to memory. I doubt if the ablest professor of mathematics, or even the readiest finance minister of the day, commands such an elastic and almost intuitive power of manipulating figures. We had quite an exhibition of mnemonic wonders every afternoon. I am not sure if this mode of acquiring knowledge is

a permanent aid to memory. I myself happen to have a weak memory so far as the form of things is concerned, though the spirit is easy enough to catch and retain. I cannot recite from memory ten lines of even my favourite poets, but can reproduce the image of a whole poem in my own words. But, speaking generally, the discipline above referred to is found most useful in after-life. The Native system of accounts is immensely superior to the European system. In dealing with the heaviest and most intricate figures, the Native accountant has merely to sing a verse, and there the result is ready to hand!

"We learnt the alphabet also on the same plan. Every letter had a nickname and a familiar versified description. That is to say, the form of the letter was likened to some object of common use and thus impressed upon the mental vision. It was what I may call an object lesson—kako kevelo, khakho khajelo, &c. Europeans are coming to that system, judging from recent publications of juvenile literature. There was a fair amount of literary instruction, too, imparted at Narbheram's school. Some verses from

Ramayan and Mahabharat, done into simple Gujarati for the occasion, served as history as well as poetry. I excelled in this as also in letter-writing orally, so to say. What splendid letters I dictated to my seniors, myself ignorant of the art of writing! Letters from wife at Surat to husband at Mumbai Bunder, now gushing, now whining, now asking for remittance, now threatening to go to the parents' house. Letters from the principal of a firm at Cambay to his factotum at Karachi, advising the departure of the good ship Ruparel, laden with pearls and precious stones. Letters from father at Broach to his son at Delhi, with the love of the distracted mother and with basketfuls of advice as to how to live in "this remote and foreign country." I enjoyed these studies exceedingly well, and was often presented with fruit or flower and the cheering words—*Ja bacha aj tane chhutti chhe* ('Go, boy, you are free to-day'). But when it came to figures, I was usually an 'uncle of the camel,' 'born of blind parents,' and other things indescribable. I was bad at receiving the rod, also; so much so that the flogging of a neighbour would send

me directly into fever. Narbheram knew this, and was kind enough usually to send me out of the room when a culprit had to be hauled up.

"In asking for permission to retire, boys had to hold up the thumb; for a drink of water, to raise the least finger; to bend down the middle with the forefinger, for the other purposes, and so forth.

"One day a refractory boy had to be brought to his senses. Narbheram had tried all his punitive regulations on him. This time, therefore, he made him kneel upon pebbles and placed a heavy slab on his back, and over the stone he himself pretended to sit. This was the last straw, and the boy gave such a shriek of agony and fright that his male relatives, who knew he had to be punished, came running into the school. But Narbheram was no respecter of persons; he took up his rod of office and kept the men at a distance. The boy, in the meantime, was shrieking at the top of his voice, and I was very nearly fainting. It may be mentioned that the stone was by no means too heavy for the fellow: the agony was all mine, his was

merely the shrieking. But it brought his mother and grandmother to the scene: they lived next door to the school. These dames were well known for their muscular development and the free use they made of it. They went up to Narbheram, gave him a good deal of Billingsgate and some clawing, and released the boy. He was withdrawn that day. I too went home, never to return to the school again. At night I was in high fever, and shortly after in the clutches of Sitlá Mátá, the goddess of small-pox. For weeks I was confined to bed, dreaming of the boy who had been, as I felt, crushed to death. I was not expected to outlive the shock, but was somehow brought round, as my poor mother said, by daily prayers and sacrifices on her part, and by nightly vigils before a small silver figure sprinkled with red ochre, the Mata. For weeks together she had lived upon parched rice and water once a day.* And this was her reward, she explained to our friends, in meek thankfulness, when they met at our

* "I too had a very strong attack of small-pox, and my mother prayed and watched and sang for over a fortnight. She was a strong-minded woman, but yielded to superstition during my illness."—*Private letter.*

house to do justice to the good things prepared in honour of my 'second birth.' One of the first things I heard on recovery was the death of poor Narbheram Mehtaji, from cholera. I was informed of it in a whisper. It was hard to realize how a man like my dear old guru,* born to command and to conquer, could have succumbed to even such enemies as cholera and death. Narbheram had appeared to me to be a special dispensation from Providence to lick the youth of Nanpura into public usefulness. Strange that such a mighty one found one who was more than a match for him! My respect for the great man underwent a sudden diminution, but my love for him remains." †

The Parsi Panchayat School at Surat.

Having taken his first lessons in Gujarati, we next find our little man in the Parsi Panchayat School, which gave religious as well as secular instruction. The religious education was in the hands of a Parsi priest—another Daru—who was about forty-five years

* "Guide and philosopher," though not friend.

† *Indian Spectator*, January 8, 1886, pp. 10-11.

old, and was, according to Malabari, "a very ungodly-looking man of God, and the terror of all city imps and street arabs." * Surat housewives called him by a Gujarati sobriquet which may be translated "urchin-herd," if such a compound is allowable. He certainly deserved the title. Here is a description of this terrible teacher:—

"A zealous man he was, a man of parts,
With scanty science, but a host of arts.
With pointed paws his fierce moustache he'd twirl,
And at the culprits the direst vengeance hurl.
His jaws he'd rub, his grizzled beard peck,
Till rubbed and pecked, the whole appeared a wreck.
A wag by nature and a stoic sour,
'Tis hard to fix his equivocal power.
Good cheer he loved, and oft a dainty dish
His wrath diverted, as we well could wish.
When thus begorged, joy, joy was all his work,
His air all blandness, and his face all smirk.
But woe betide the hour, if e'er his meal
Was late; that would his hidden traits reveal.
His zeal rose higher, as his stomach fell;
And hard his fervour on our skins would tell.
Sharp went the whizzing whip, fast flew the cane,
And he fairly caper'd in his wrath insane.
He chanted pray'rs, oh Lord! in such gruff tones
'Twould set on rack the hoar Zoroaster's bones.

. . . . . .

* "Indian Muse," p. 82 note.

He shrieked and staggered in his zealous rage,
Till he looked an actor on a tragic stage.
But when our whines the neighbouring women drew,
The man of zeal at once persuasive grew—
Expounded doctrines, in a fervid breath,
Preached patience, virtue, truth, and tacit faith.
Thank God I'd then too small religious wit
To understand that canting hypocrite." *

There was one characteristic of the man which has not been well brought out in these lines. It was this. Whenever he wanted to administer a flogging, he used to order his class to pray vociferously in order to drown the cries of his victim. The school contained both boys and girls, and Malabari well remembers how the ruffian used sometimes to seize a girl by her tresses, and whisk her violently about in the air, as if she was a lifeless marionette, while the room was resounding with invocations to Ahurmazd recited by her school-fellows. Another favourite amusement of this monster of a schoolmaster was to roll up an erring boy in a carpet-piece, or put the poor wretch under his capacious Jama,† and then strut about

* "Indian Muse," pp. 83-84.

† The long robe worn by Parsi priests.

from one end of the schoolroom to the other. His gesticulations on such occasions used to send a shiver through the little ones who witnessed his performances. Often, when angry, he would dash off his turban, and glare so ferociously with his bull eyes, and contort his face into such frightful grimaces, that some of the more nervous children would swoon at the sight of these exhibitions. If a boy was late, this zealous priest was forthwith at his door and walked off with him without notice, though the boy might be just washing his face, or taking a morsel of food from his mother. I have said he had a capacious Jama. That sufficed not only for kidnapping little boys, but even for confining the diminutive master who used to teach reading and arithmetic in the last class. Behram and his class-mates, after having their turn with the Daru, used to go upstairs to this diminutive teacher. Once it so happened that they went up later than the appointed hour, as they had been detained by the Daru, and of course assigned this reason to the teacher. Shortly afterwards the Daru came up, and the teacher addressing him rather roughly inquired why

the boys had not been sent up at the usual time. The Daru's reply was a swift and sudden jerk which sent the inquirer flying into space, followed by another which sent him softly under the folds of the Daru's Jama; and thus enveloping the Liliputian knight of the three R's he stood, with a Harlequin's grin, in the midst of the amazed children. Of course, since that day little Chagan lost the respect of his boys, while the Daru continued to be dreaded, if possible, more than formerly. He had influential friends among the visitors, and was moreover a priest, a silk mercer, and a toddy-seller, and thus he always managed to escape scot-free. Such teachers were not very rare in those days, and may even now be met with in some indigenous schools in out-of-the-way villages.

Early Associates—Good and Bad.

"My best friend in early school-days," writes Malabari to me, "was Gulbai, daughter of —— —— at Surat. She had the misfortune to be at school with me, under that tyrant Mehervan Daru, of whom I spoke to you

at Ahmedabad. She had the additional misfortune to be clever and obliging. So she must come to school an hour or two earlier than the other children, must help the master's wife in cooking and other household duties, must teach the little ones whilst the master is away, on pleasure or business, offering prayers for so many coppers a piece, or selling toddy for so many coppers a gallon. Woe be to poor Gul if she is detained at home some day, and puts in appearance after the master. Up jumps the barbarian, performing a wild war dance, such as you read of in stories about Red Indians, catches hold of her beautiful hair, and whisks her about in empty space. She is accustomed to the treatment, my poor Gul; but sitting in a corner, away from the horrible scene, I feel as if I should spring upon the monster and throttle him. Gul reads the thought in my face, in the close-clutched fingers and body convulsed with emotion, as she approaches the mattress on which I am sitting. She gives me a grateful look that makes me hate the tyrant almost less than I hate myself. Next time she is to be late, I offer to work for her. She smiles at the pro-

posal, being my senior by several years, and much taller. During the recess hour we often sit together, without exchanging many words. I caress her hair, and rub her forehead after the outrage that has been offered to them. She takes my head gently down on her lap, and thus we pass the minutes in mute sympathy. There was something of the elder sister in poor Gul, that I have seldom come across in others. She had been a light-hearted child before she was brought within the sphere of the brutal discipline I have referred to. With me she was always thoughtful. Her friendliness I cannot forget. Every day she brought me some presents—sweets, fruit, pencil, and so on. Sometimes, when the ogre was away, and I was in fever, she would sing to me in whispers. How strange we should hardly ever have talked together, as friends usually do at that age, of our hopes and ambitions, of our pursuits, of everything that could be called a topic! The fact is, I felt we were two brothers or two sisters—Gul and I—who knew everything about each other in the present, and cared for little beyond that. I have never thought of sex in friendship, except when reminded of it.

by accident. I may sit with a lady friend by the hour, chatting as if to my own brother, or listening as one sister listens to another. The same is the case pretty much with my correspondence—I do not feel constrained to adopt the artificial language that obtains so largely as result of an obtrusive distinction of the sexes. Of course, I am speaking of *friends;* and poor Gul was the dearest of them all in my school-days. They tell me she lived to be a happy wife and mother, and died a few years ago. This makes her perhaps more living to me in the present, and, I trust, in the future, where all shall be perfect love, without the jarring elements of sex, caste, creed, position.

"About a year after this, I was thrown into the society of what might be described as bad boys, who went by nicknames, were the despair of their parents and a terror to the neighbourhood. The most troublesome of these was Jamsu ——, a young priest, who assisted his father in saying vicarious prayers. Jamsu was known to have the magnetic current in his hands too highly developed. Wherever he placed the hands they lifted up things not belonging to him, of course without his ever

knowing it. This is how we spoke of Jamsu's lifting propensities.

"The other fellow went by the name of Washerman's Bullock. He was a great bully, and used to make some of us small boys slave for him, for the privilege of having his company. If any of us adjured his society, he would waylay and thrash us. But he had one weakness which I found out, and that made him behave himself to me, that is, to leave me severely alone. It was his inordinate love of newly-washed clothes. Whenever he lifted his arm against me, I simply said, 'I'll tell.' Those magic words unnerved him. What I threatened to 'tell' was that he took off his clothes every night, swathed himself in a bed-sheet, washed the clothes, and then turned in; he got up in the morning, ironed the clothes and came out into the streets a dandy. That was the secret of his ever-white dresses; it was the skeleton in his cupboard. Of course, this was a caricature of what the poor fellow actually did. But the thing told when it got talked about. Hence his name—Washerman's Bullock; hence the loss of his influence over his victims. Jamsu, the magnet-fingered, and

Washerman's Bullock are both respectable members of society at this day.

"The third of my earlier friends was an incorrigible, and has grown worse with years. He betted, gambled, and pilfered whilst officiating as a priest. And neither Mehervan Daru's brutal thrashing nor the irons by which he tied him up by the hours, without food or drink, could check the flights of his erring genius. The fellow had a wondrous elastic constitution, both of mind and body; and his conscience was even more elastic. His uncle would bundle him up in every form conceivable, to see if he could break some of his limbs, and thus keep him from mischief. It was all useless. In less than an hour after the operation the boy would be himself again, ready to be at his old games. He would walk up coolly to the railway station, ask the porter to take up anything lying handy, show it to the clerk in an offhand manner, and walk off leisurely, with all the air of rightful ownership. He would go up to the Postmaster and obtain registered articles, representing himself as the addressee. He would go to the housewife and ask for the husband's watch in the husband's name,

having ascertained that the watch had been left behind. He would go from one doctor to another, and, with compliments, ask for a loan of his surgical instruments. He would order bales of cotton in the name of a merchant, and dispose of them in the next street. Latterly he is believed to have developed into a *pucka* swindler, housebreaker, and man about the town."

Early Aspirations.

The influence of such associates was neutralized by the salutary home surroundings of the boy, and the high aspirations aroused in him by listening to the tales of Persian heroes and heroines.

"Gujarati recitations from the Shah-Nameh," he writes, "were my first pabulum. The Shah-Nameh * was then kept only in manuscript, and was prized above all things by the few families that could afford to have it —generally a portion of Firdousi's immortal work. They kept it with their most precious possessions—horoscopes, genealogical papers, &c. On important holidays, especially in the

* History of Kings, the Great Epic of Persia.

month of Farvardeen (when the names of the departed great and the dear ones have to be remembered, and their spirits praised and commended to the mercy of Heaven), you might have seen little family groups sitting on a mattress, after supper on unleavened bread, fruit and wine consecrated during the Baj, or the Afringan ceremony. Men, women, and children sat together. Yes, even thirty years ago Parsi women enjoyed all the freedom of life that is due to them as human beings, less, perhaps, in secular matters, wherein the tenor of everyday life had been somewhat ruffled by contact with Hindus and Mahomedans, than in matters spiritual. You will be delighted to know that our women could not only offer prayers and sacrifices of sandalwood on the domestic hearth, of flowers, fruit, bread, wine, &c., but were even prayed to and invoked. In Hushbam (Husha is Sanskrit Usha, the Dawn), one of the oldest of our morning hymns, we are asked to pray for, or, as I feel, pray to, the souls of 'all good women that were, all good women that are, all good women that will be.' That is Zoroaster's teaching. In my search of good things said about the

sex to which my mother belonged, I have not come across anything better than this chivalrous vindication of the status of woman. Probably you have something like it in the earlier Vedic hymns.

"Well, the Shah-Nameh would be read out to us by a cunning priest or scribe; and as the poet dwelt on the wisdom of some great prince, the valour of some brave knight, or the virtue of some lady fair at his court, we felt the chief characters of Firdousi Tusi living over again before us, inspiring us with a strange love of the romantic. The reciter took us back to Jamshid and Fredun, to Kershasp, Kaikaus, Kaikhusro, to Asfandiar and Tus, to Rustom and Sorab and Barzor, to Godrez and Gaiu and Gurgin, making us laugh, and cry, and clap our hands by turn. The most interested of the audience were the women and the children —the men, I remember, were indifferent, being mostly in their cups. They would either drink 'once more' to the health of some hero whose exploits the reader had just narrated, or indulge in a strain of maudlin sentimentality over his discomfiture—quaffing the bowl of punch to the health of a favourite victor, or drowning

their grief in the same bowl when the favourite was in danger. I also remember how these gentlemen got up a sham fight, called Gabardi, in which they pretended to celebrate some of the main incidents of the Shah-Nameh. The Gabardi was a vile affair, and we despised our elders for the part they took in it—those knights in buckram, or rather in gunny bags, any two of whom gave each other their paws and took a round over a small arena improvised in the bazaar, pretending a trial of strength. We youngsters managed the thing in another spirit. We would set up a girl, a live Parsi lass, as the Peri, the Princess of Shamangan, or the typical damsel in distress, and fight over her in real earnest, till sometimes we drew blood.

"These Shah-Nameh recitals and readings—I was one of the privileged readers and actors—fired my imagination as nothing else did. So great, indeed, was my ambition in those days of early boyhood, that I hardly think an empire would have satisfied it. Many a dream would I dream by day and by night, of taking up the double *rôle* of Rustom and Kaikhusro. But a glance at the bleak interior of our house,

with a severely matter-of-fact stepfather, brought me back to my senses soon enough. And then I would go in for Fakiri, an utter forgetfulness of self. For a good long while did my soul thus fluctuate between this Fakiri and that fantastic imperialism."

Father Peepal, Alchemy and Magic.

"I was initiated," continues Malabari, "into some other kinds of knowledge, of which a mention may amuse you. The first of these was a worship of Pipda Bapa—Father Peepal—a large old tree which was believed to be the abode of a beneficent genius. This latter, I was told, was a venerable saint, walking about at night in a muslin dress and high sandals. His business was to do good. But he was a jovial spirit withal. He tested the faith of his followers, sometimes by setting fire to their houses, sometimes by removing the babies from their cradles, and so on. Those who trusted him and said Pipda Bapa meant it all for the best, were not only relieved of their temporary distress, but most handsomely rewarded. I know of ladies who believed in Papda Bapa, and who have assured me and

others that the good old saint has helped them with food, employment, with gold and silver ornaments on occasions of marriage, &c. For such favours, of course, a daily offering was necessary; and I have seen maunds of sweetmeats, basketfuls of flowers, and fruits, strewn at the foot of this historic tree, with canfuls of milk placed before it for the use of the holy one, evening after evening. My mother was one of the votaries, though her offerings consisted only of flowers and milk. She inspired me with great respect for Pipda Bapa, and the stories I used to hear from all sides had a powerful effect on my imagination. My faith was all the easier to cherish, because, often of an evening we street-boys would approach Pipda Bapa barefooted, bow low to him, and *eat up as much of the offerings as we could.* Did we not know that the Bapa, being a spirit, never ate or drank? Often and often did I dream in those days of Pipda Bapa walking up to my bed majestically and saying, *Bacha, khushal raho* ('Child, be happy'). And happy indeed I was in the evening under the umbrageous Peepal shade, munching *mithai* and other sweets, and quaffing handfuls of milk. This

same Pipda Bapa used to 'possess' some of our neighbours, whereby they got the gift of prophecy. I knew an old lady, a virgin widow, whose life was pure and above reproach, but who was known to be rather 'innocent.' Well, ordinarily, this lady could not speak or understand a word of Hindustani, but when she was inspired by Pipda Bapa she would speak beautiful Hindustani and Persian. At such times people used to flock to her, to have their fortunes told. It was a sight to see the handsome old spinster sitting on a *patla*, or footstool, dressed in thin muslin, with her jet black tresses hanging down to her knees, and telling each one of the consultants the *hakikat* (details) of the future—how A. would have a fine boy, how B. would have to leave Surat, how C. should give up business, how D. should launch upon another business, and so on—all in delightful Hindustani, spoken as if the speaker was born with the gift of prophecy. I remember this very well, as I was one of the 'virgin-boys' who had to surround my lady prophetess within a certain radius, to keep the profane and corrupt away from her by our looks that were supposed to search the hearts of the

wicked. The ceremony was of an imposing character, though private. I have heard of a parallel case since coming over to Bombay. Who can say there is no power of inspiration, and that there are not some favoured ones who *are* inspired for the good of the community ?

"As boys we came across a good deal of humbug and unreality in this line. For instance, we heard of a 'charmed rupee' which had the power of reproducing itself. The owners were a Parsi family of weavers, special favourites of Pipda Bapa who used to weave for them of a night when they were tired. Well, a member of the family would buy *ghee*,* or cloth, or mutton, with this charmed rupee ; but so potent was the charm attaching to it that the rupee would return to the box the same day, after the purchase had been effected. Some of us young fellows were taken up with the idea, and besought an opium-eating *ustád*,† a Purbhaya disciple of Bahadur Singh, to reveal the secret of making such a rupee. He held out for a long time, saying we were not 'safe.' One day, when he

* Clarified butter.

† A master of music, magic and gymnastics.

had taken a larger pill of opium than usual, we got round the old fellow, promising to do *anything* if he revealed the secret which he told us he knew. He exacted a promise of absolute secrecy, and dictated a prescription: On a certain day, at a certain hour and minute, under a certain stellar conjunction, when certain animals are half-asleep, others fully asleep, we must recite certain Mantras, and place an ordinary rupee into the mouth of a she frog in labour! For months some of the boys tried to meet these impossible requirements, till at last they began to see that the *ustád* was a humbug and the charmed rupee a myth.

"We lost some time in discovering another mare's nest of magic, *Kimiun*, or alchemy. The *ustád* taught us half a dozen processes of making gold from brass, silver from zinc, &c. There was some chemical half-sense in the processes, I believe, and many of my juvenile colleagues gave their time to realizing the dream; one or two have gone crazy over it for life. For myself, there were two things that made me very indifferent about the matter. Firstly, I did not care much for gold, real or

otherwise; and secondly and chiefly, the processes suggested by the *ustád* involved such labour and expense that I thought it would be easier, and cheaper and honester, to buy gold rather than to concoct it from base metals.

"Another trick of magic we were taught by the *ustád* was about *Mohini*, or fascination. The process was rather funny: Whip down a female lizard, cut off her tail while alive, pass it through a number of 'magical' and other operations; and then if you have that tail on your person and glance at any passer-by, he or she will follow you like a slave. I had already taken these charms to be frauds. But a cousin, named Hirji, a brother of Rati, who was my senior and a particular chum, could not get over the infatuation. He fed the *ustád* on opium, and the *ustád* fed Hirji on magical frauds. Poor Hirji took a violent fancy to this particular trick. One day he thought he had mastered it, and would try it on some girl coming to the Tapti bank to fetch water. The trick was common in those days. Honest women knew how to deal with the tricksters, and those who were not honest found the *mohini* to be a convenient excuse

for flirtation. On the evening in question Hirji was determined to try his luck. Of course he was too young to mean harm, but the demon of pride had worked within him. So down he goes to a handsome woman coming up the steps, balancing her burnished water-pots skilfully on her head, and touches her with the tail of the lizard. The woman seems to love a joke. So she leisurely puts down her water-pots. Hirji's heart jumps for joy. He stands there, like a bullock, waiting for his *inamorata* to confess that she was conquered. But far from succumbing to the subtle charm of the lizard, she seizes the boy-lover with both his hands, and cries out at the top of her voice, 'Well, lover mine, so you want to be put to the breast?' She pretends to suit the words to action, and gives Hirji a thump on the head, that moistens his eye, dries up his throat, and drives the calf love out of his bullock's heart. He is dumfoundered. The incident is followed by loud laughter from among the bevy of fair ones who have come to fetch water. Poor Hirji comes gingerly up the steps, a sadder but wiser magician; and the sight of his 'rejected addresses' makes me

laugh as if I am going to split. He is very angry at first, but on being reasoned with he promises to give up the *ustád*. Next day we had a capital swim across the river, and were very near drowning. I remember poor Hirji's words after we had been rescued: 'I wish I had been drowned *yesterday*.' Two years later Hirji died, some said of cholera, others of poison. He was a fine fellow, simple and trusting, but wayward like all our family."

Another School.

Having learnt a little Gujarati, Behram was sent to the Sir Jamsetji Anglo-Vernacular School at Surat. His first master was a Parsi getting the handsome pay of Rs. 4 a month; but he made up for this scanty allowance by employing his pupils to "hew wood and draw water" for his household, and even to shampoo his legs. He appears to have been a snob of the first water, although one would hardly expect snobbery from such a low-paid teacher. Behram was about a year under him.

The boy's next teacher was Mr. Dosabhai. He is still working as a teacher, and is on very friendly terms with his former pupil. Malabari

also remembers Mr. Hardevram, a Braham, who spoke excellent English, and Mr. Fakirbhai, a Bania, who was a first-rate arithmetician. This latter was deaf, and was often deceived by his pupils, as he could not make out if the oral answers given to him were right or wrong. Mere motion of the lips sometimes sufficed for him—and the little ones used often to have a laugh at the expense of their worthy master.

Behram had a lift from the 2nd Standard class to the 4th. He wrote a pretty hand, and Mr. Curtis, the Educational Inspector, liked it so much that he sent the boy's copybook to all the schools in his Division as a model. But in the 4th Standard class the teacher was a martinet and a Pharisee. His pupils had to fetch his lunch and do other little menial services for him. He used often to come late, and then go to prayers. In short, he had no idea of his duty, and the boys consequently made but little progress under him.

Life, "A Light and Lasting Frolic"* Marred by the Presence of the Schoolmaster.

I have purposely given no dates above, as

* "Indian Muse," p. 81.

exact dates are not ascertainable. But I take it that Malabari was born in 1853, went to school when six years old, was for two or three months with Minochehr Daru, about as many months with Narbheram, about a year and a quarter in the Gujarati school, then about a year with a carpenter to learn carpentering (his mother belonged to a bhansali or house-building family)—and about two or three years in the Anglo-vernacular school. He lost his father when he was six and his mother when he was in the twelfth year. These facts taken together might lead to an inference that he could not have led a gipsy life for a long time, but the truth is that Behram, before the death of his mother, was quite a different being from what he became after his sad bereavement. Up to eight, he liked nothing so well as fun and play. He was skilful in flying kites and in other boyish sports. When he was nine, Merwanji lost his little fortune, and Behram and his mother had to look poverty in the face. But the spirit of the boy was no way damped, and he apparently did not see why a poor boy should not be merry on even nothing a day. He had a capital voice, that of "a lark and of

a nightingale together"—and he could sing. The streets of Surat were in those days frequented by the *Khialis*, and the poor itinerant minstrels who ought to be (but are not) the pride of the country. The *Khialis* are now dead at Surat, and the minstrels are probably singing their last lays. But Malabari remembers both yet, and is not likely to forget them. We may as well pause for a minute or two to see what manner of men the *Khialis* and the street-singers were in those days.

The street-singer, fortunately, is not yet an extinct species, and may, therefore, be studied by any one who does not deem it *infra dig.* to talk with such a humble creature. He can sing you historical ballads and religious myths, love tales and devotional songs. His dress is generally ragged, and he has often, nay almost always, to live from hand to mouth. He timidly approaches your door, strikes up a tune on his one-stringed guitar, and then breaks out into a ditty of Premanand or Dayaram, of Kabir or Tukaram, full of lively or pathetic music, or, diving into aphoristic philosophy, speaks

"To mortals of their little week;
Of their sorrows and delights;
Of their passions and their spites;
Of their glory and their shame;
What doth strengthen and what maim."

Sorrow knows not how to sit heavily on this humble "bard of passion and of mirth," who is content with a largess of a pice or two, who cares not for the smiles or frowns of fortune, and though in this world appears to be hardly of it.

The Surat *Khiali* was of another breed. *Khial*, which literally means "thought" or "fancy," is one of the varieties of what is called the *Desi* system of music, as opposed to the *Margi*. A learned Hindu expert in musical lore would call the *Margi* system "classical" and the Desi system "romantic." Mr. Balwant Trimbak Sahasrabudhe, an undoubted authority on Hindu music, writes:—"Desi, with its numerous ramifications, is the system now obtaining in India. . . . The Desi system first acquired importance from the Buddhist musicians, and received fuller development from Mussalmans, who introduced *khial* from the Hindu Dhruvapada system." In Gujarati *khial* is a particular kind of metre.

The Surat *khiali* was a poet-philosopher. There were two sects of these wonderful men —the Kalgiwalas and the Turrawalas, so called from the instrument of music used by them or the dress worn by the leaders. The Kalgiwalas were Sakti worshippers, in other words, they held the female energy to be superior to the male, and, therefore, the Hindu goddess Parvati superior to her husband Shiva. The Turrawalas, on the contrary, held Shiva superior to Parvati, and the male energy superior to the female. Curious as it may seem, though much of the poetry and thought of the *khialis* was Hindu, their creed was eclectic and knew no distinction of caste, race, or colour. Indeed, the tradition is that Alahbax, a Borah, who used to sew gunny-bags, was the leader of the Kalgiwalas at one stage of their career, while Bahadursing, a small gatekeeper at Line-no-rasto (Soldiers' Lines) at Surat was his rival. Bahadursing was, of course, a Turrawala and a disciple of Maharajgir, who was a disciple of Tukangir, the founder of that system. In Malabari's days, the Kalgiwalas were in the ascendant, but as usual with Malabari in after-life, he attached

himself to the weaker party. An opium-eating pupil of Bahadursing took kindly to him, and taught him about 2,000 *Khials*, *Ghazals* and *Thumris*. Some of the Khials or controversial songs of Bahadursing and Alahbax, it is said, were almost Miltonic in their grandeur.

Socrates had his symposia, and the *Khialis* had theirs. Let us go to one of these, and see what takes place. Bahadursing and Alahbax are of course no more, but their disciples are alive, the initiated as well as the uninitiated. In a prominent part of the Bazar, a carpet is spread, and the *Khialis* of one school seat themselves on it and commence their songs. It is a still evening or twilight gray, and the people have leisure to listen. A large crowd assembles, but the singing at first goes on smoothly enough. The leader of the party, however, suddenly espies a *Khiali* of the other school, and without naming him, challenges him in an impromptu verse to answer a knotty question in history, science, or metaphysics. After a few minutes there is a reply—and a rejoinder follows, and a surrejoinder, all in extempore verse. The smaller fry take their part in the controversy, and soon

descend from high and dry philosophy to vulgar satire and abuse. Our Behram is among the Turrawalas, and he is often trotted out on special occasions. Like the others, he has his shoes in his hands, in order to display the better part of valour in case the stronger side should show their teeth—makes an impromptu attack on the Kalgiwalas, not philosophical but sarcastic, and then takes to his heels with the other young *Khialis*, followed by the enraged Kalgiwalas. And so the symposium ends. It must, however, be remembered that this picture does not belong to the palmy days of *Khials*.

The initiated *Khialis*, when they took care to exclude the uninitiated, used to have calmer sittings, sometimes extending over a week or two together. My idea is that their difference mainly turned upon whether the Creator should be worshipped as our Father in heaven, or as our Mother in heaven. The Vaishnavas imagined the relation of the human soul to the Eternal Spirit to be that of wife and husband or lover and beloved, but unfortunately they embodied this conception in the loves of Krishna and the Gopis. Our *Khialis*

drew on the mythological biography of Shiva and Parvati and their children, Ganesh and Okha, and thus, like the Vaishnavas, found themselves in a vortex of materialistic legends. Every pure fresh current of religious thought has fared in India (as in other countries) like a pellucid stream descending from mountain heights to the plains below, and growing muddier and darker in its progress to the sea. The Ganges in the Himalayas is quite different from the Ganges at Hardwar, Benares, or Calcutta. The farther it goes from its lofty source, the more has it to mingle with the dirt and *débris* of the lowlands, and the more impure it becomes. Similarly, when a "towering phantasy" has given birth to a great religious truth, its dissemination would seem to keep pace with its corruption. The history of Latin Christianity, as well as of Buddhism, bears out this view; but the history of Hinduism, more than that of any other religion, affords its aptest and saddest illustration. It ought, therefore, to surprise nobody that the latter-day *Khialis* often indulged in ribald and obscene songs unworthy of the founders of their schools—unworthy of philosophers as

much as of poets—and that at times they ended their controversies with the unanswerable argument of fisticuffs.

Behram was not one of the initiated, and did not then understand the philosophy of his sect. But he appreciated their poetry, and could compose his own *khials*. There are several good ones in the *Niti Vinod*. They are on homely subjects—for the *Khialis* often descended from their altitudes to discuss the affairs of everyday life, or the merits of their city or river or their place of pilgrimage. But we have had enough of the *Khialis* now. Suffice it to say, that they exercised a powerful influence on Behram.

Juvenile Picnics.

We have seen Behram at a *Khiali* symposium. We may now accompany him to a picnic. It is as strange as the symposium. He has a rival *improvisatore* among the Kalgiwalas, a Borah boy of the name of Adam. Though rivals, the two, unlike other rivals, are great friends. Both have good voices; Behram's is noted for its volume and its melody—and both have not much of pocket money.

They can, however, afford a pice between them, and with this they have bought some parched rice, and now proceed on a moonlight night to enjoy themselves on the bank of the Tapti. The parched grains are thrown on the sand, and the two friends are picking them up one by one, and singing away for dear love. Behram has a rude flute or a *sarangi*,* and he varies his singing with instrumental music while his companion keeps time on a *thali* (a metal platter). Women turn up, and take an unconscionably long time to fill their pitchers from the river, for they are filling their ears with the music of the two boys. Women in Gujarat have a song-literature of their own, and they are obliged to sing on certain occasions. Their songs are mostly *garbas*, and I have occasionally seen a mother with two or three water-vessels well balanced on her head, hearing her little daughter repeat a *garba* taught on the previous night, as the two wend their way home from the Sabarmati. These *garbas* are well worth study. I would specially commend them to the attention of those who

* Fiddle.

deny that there is any premature marriage among the Hindus, or that such marriage is an evil. The *Garbas* and *Khials* of Gujarat are full of this subject; they mostly take the form of a lament by a widow who has lost her husband in her prime, or by a girl married in infancy to a greybeard, or by a grown-up bride whose wedded lord is yet in his cradle. It was only the other day that I heard of a Visa Nagara Brahmin girl married at the age of a year and a half, who is now a widow at two. Behram was fond of these *garbas* and *khials*, and could sing them with an irresistible pathos; and I take it, this was the best preparation for the future campaigner against social vices.

Swimming and Drinking and Walking.

Behram was an early riser, especially when he had to go to school in the morning. His house was very near the Tapti, and I am sorry to say he learned swimming and drinking almost at one and the same time. I have not kept back the fact that our hero before he lost his mother—for we are now talking of that period only—took part sometimes in

obscene songs, and I am bound to state that once upon a time he tossed off no less than nine copper cups containing not under a half pound each of that seductive liquor called Surti Daru (*i.e.* Mhowra liquor), though now he is practically a teetotaler. His antidote and that of his companions—for he took care to sin in company—was generally a plentiful quantity of lemons, a plunge into the Tapti from the parapets, a swim across to Adajan on the opposite bank, a deep draught of toddy there (Adajan is famous for its toddy), and a swim across again. Many of my readers perhaps do not know what a Parsi *jasan* or *ghambar* is. I am only concerned with the *jasan*, for Behram was more than partial to this "rouse before the morn," though his means would not permit of his indulging in it, except occasionally. Slices of pomegranate, pommeloes, pine-apples and guavas in the first place, a piece of unleavened bread in the next, and last but not least, the "all-softening, over-powering" daru were the three courses of Behram's *jasan;* and after taking his antidote he did not seem to be much the worse for his dissipation. He would dry his clothes with his fellow-sinners,

and quietly walk to the school, as if nothing had happened. Behram also used to join walking matches, and would tramp it to Nausari from Surat. Even now, he is a splendid walker and climber, doing fifteen to twenty miles at a stretch, and climbing the steepest ascents when in health.

Riding on the Sly.

It goes without saying that Merwanji, and therefore Behram, had no horse, and yet the boy taught himself to ride. Here, too, it is necessary to make a confession. There was a timber-seller in Surat of the name of Abdul Kadur. He did not sell his timber himself, but employed agents. He kept also several ponies for hire, but did not give them out on hire himself. He was a religious man, busy with his God, and while so busy, Behram and his friends used often to take out the ponies for exercise, and have a ride free of charge. The good man never even once resented these trespasses, but, on the contrary, often did a kindness to those who offended against him and his property. "He was," Malabari tells

me, "my boyhood's hero," and, later on, we shall see him quoting Abdul Kadur's famous prescription against fever:—"Starve out thy fever, my son, and make *her* sick of thee by constantly moving about." Abdul Kadur was certainly a remarkable man. His business throve, though he did not attend to it. It was his ancestral trade, and he kept it up. But what right had he to the income? It was given by God, and to God's wards, the poor, it must go. Abdul Kadur, with such thoughts, kept little of his earnings to himself. But they were not his earnings, and there was no merit in giving them away. Hence this strict bondsman of his conscience used to put on a cooly's coarse garments every second night (in those days steamers used to leave Surat for Bombay every second night), earn a few pice by carrying loads in the harbour, buy a little oil and milk, with these return to his Mosque, distribute the milk among the blind and the maimed at the Mosque, give some drops of it to the old dog there, and then lighting a little lamp with the oil, offer his meed of praise and prayer to Allah. No wonder he excited the admiration of Behram.

The Little Knight of La Mancha.

"The child," it has been said, "is father of the man," and it is instructive to see Behram, in the morning of his life, interesting himself in the cause of the girl-widow and the child-bride. The following two instances related by Malabari speak for themselves:—

"It may amuse, but will scarcely surprise, the reader to hear of me as a match-maker. I have had fair training in the match-making line, and have at times tried my hand at match-breaking, too. The first match that I helped, in a humble way, to render happy, was in the case of Manchha. Manchha was a Hindu maiden of the milk-seller caste at Surat. She happened to have lost her boy-husband when only a child, and at about twenty she was married to a widower of her own caste. The marriage was, of course, very strongly opposed by her people; but her husband had some means, and was the wife's brother of a wealthy money-lender, Tapidas. So Mr. and Mrs. Tapidas patronized the match, and installed Manchha and her husband in a new milk-shop at Nanpura, so that they might be out of harm's

way. But here the pair were no better off than they might have been elsewhere. The rival shopkeepers kept aloof from them, spreading all manner of rumours to their discredit. The new shop was virtually boycotted. When this came to the knowledge of the Parsis of Nanpura (including schoolboys), they swore a big oath to befriend Manchha. They transferred their patronage almost in a body from Dullab and Vallab, hitherto their favourite milk-sellers, to Manchha. Thus Manchha's shop was besieged every morning by scores of Parsi customers in search of milk and cream and curd and butter. Well do I remember her smile of gratitude as she dispensed the products of her dairy. She was particularly kind to us schoolboys, because it was we who had brought her case to notice. For a time all went merrily with Manchha and her spouse, as merrily as a marriage bell. But all this while their enemies were hatching a plot against their peace. Now Manchha was a big strapping body, not particularly proud of her lord. She was handsome, too, and extremely sociable in an innocent sort of way. So, unhappily for

her, she made friends with an elderly Parsi who monopolized her afternoons, whom she served with *pan supari*, and with whom she discussed local scandals. There was nothing wrong in all this. Manchha was not to her husband what Anarkali was to Akbar, whom the old stupid is said to have ordered to be buried alive for having unconsciously returned a smile from Mirza Selim. Manchha flirted with her venerable beau in open day, as the jolly milkmaids and the malans * and the tambolans † of Surat often do. But in this case her caste people made it too hot for the poor girl, and one morning we found Manchha's shop deserted by her and her husband. Whither they went we could never find out. For months we grieved over the loss, and thought it was a shame that *our* Manchha should have *eloped with her husband* without taking friends into confidence. Her aged lover took to bed the day after the elopement, some said from unrequited love, others said because Manchhabai had forgotten to return sundry ornaments she had borrowed from him.

* Women selling flowers.

† Women selling betal leaves and nuts.

This latter was, I think, an invention of her enemies.

"My next lesson was in match-breaking, or rather an attempt at it. An old tamboli (*pan supari* seller) one day surprised his customers by bringing up from the district a girl whom he represented as his wife. She was about fifteen, whilst he was over fifty, besides being a morose, taciturn, miserly beast, whom nobody liked to exchange words with except by way of teasing. The schoolboys of Nanpura found in the girl an excellent handle for persecuting her husband. Returning from school they would go up to him, and one of them would ask, 'Kaka,* where is your — daughter?' — and he would reply: 'You fool, she is your mother.' Then would the boy retort, 'Very well, Kaka, I'll inform my forgetful father about it,' at which the outraged husband would shriek like mad, flourishing his lime-stick.

"Many were the annoyances to which the boys subjected him; they sang songs in his wife's honour, they praised her beauty, they advised her aloud not to throw away her

* Uncle.

charms on a scarecrow, a mumbling opium-eater, and so forth. One evening they collected copper pieces amongst themselves, had them converted into a four-anna silver piece, and then went to the tamboli's shop. The spokesman went forward, and, holding out the silver coin, said: 'Kaka, let us have four annas' worth of pan,* supari,† chuno ‡ and katho. § Look sharp, there is to be a singing party.' The tamboli executed the order cheerfully, advising the boys in a fatherly spirit not to be truants, and not to tease elderly men like himself, &c., &c. They listened to him with bowed heads, but as soon as he held out the packages, asking for the coin, the leader of the gang remarked, 'Not this way, Kaka; I must have the packages from Kaki's hands.' A shout of cheers from his companions greeted the remark. This was too much for the unsuspecting tamboli. 'You son of a she-demon,' he yelled, 'why were you born to be the plague of my life?; at your birth you ought to have been turned into

* Betal leaf.
† Betal nut.
‡ Lime to apply to the leaf.
§ Catechu.

a stone. Have you no shame in speaking thus of an honest man's wife?' 'Don't I pay for it?' replied the young profligate, with an insolent leer which maddened his opponent, and exhibiting the silver coin. 'But, you black-faced villain, she is in the kitchen above,' explained the tamboli, half relenting. 'Send for her, Kakaji, send for her—shall I call her down?' that was the boy's rejoinder. The tamboli again lost his temper, and remarked, sulkily, 'Go away, I don't want your custom.' 'Very well,' said the boy, 'I'll go to the other shop.' Then followed a struggle in the tamboli's breast between jealousy and avarice, and in a minute or so avarice, the stronger passion, triumphed. He called out his wife, abusing her as the cause of his misery; she came down, half crying, half smiling, protesting against the old man's injustice. In answer he thrust the packages into her hands with the injunction, 'Give these to that dog.' The boy reached out his hand eagerly, but as the fair tambolan's hand approached his, he slowly withdrew his hand till he made her lean more than half her body forward. He then pretended to kiss her hand,

took the packages, and gave her the four-anna piece with a smile she could not help returning. The old man sat all this while grinding his teeth and cursing everybody before him, including his innocent wife.

"It may be mentioned here that the boys were too young to be serious. But light-hearted as these frolics were, they were a terror to many a jealous husband or cruel father. The young women, as a rule, encouraged their little gallants." *

Fast and Furious Fun.

These merry-makings were innocent enough, but I can't say the same thing about some other achievements of Behram. For example, he and ten or eleven of his school-chums, going early to school, see a Bania shopkeeper snoring away on a cot lying outside his shop. Instantly they put their shoulders to the cot and remove it to the Killa maidan. That was too bad—for the Bania was sure to think his house was haunted by hobgoblins, or perhaps start some equally beautiful theory to account for his translation. Curious to say, the police-

* *Indian Spectator*, p. 588.

men on the beat often enjoyed this fun. One of them was a special friend of Behram, and I am sorry to say taught him some questionable songs.

Early one morning, while on their way to school, some of the merry boys took it into their heads to carry off a poor sweetmeat-seller, as he lay fast asleep outside his shop. Four stalwart Parsi lads gave their four shoulders to the four legs of his primitive cot, and walked leisurely toward the riverside (where dead bodies used to be burnt), in a funeral procession, with the usual funeral chant of "Ráma bolo bhái Ráma" ("Utter the name of Ráma, brothers, utter the name of Ráma"). As the *cortege* approached the grounds, the confectioner, who had probably gone to bed on a heavy stomach, or a cup too much, awoke in a half-conscious way, and began sobbing piteously and asking Heaven to have mercy on him. He thought he was on his death-bed; so calling his wife, he ran over the list of his debtors, among whom was one of the practical jokers that were bearing him to the burning-ground. As he grew a little more conscious, his looks wandered about, and

he scratched his head. He then felt the round tuft of hair on his skull, to make sure it was there, and then bellowed out his objurgations to drown the funeral cries of "Ráma bolo." The bearers quietly laid down their burden, and with a ringing cheer ran off with their following to school.

Another amusement of these street imps was to tease Borah Jamalji—"one of those noble fellows, you know," Malabari told me, "who seldom dun you for a debt." But woe unto the poor old Borah, if he ever dunned Behram and his merry band. Early in the morning before he was up from his bed, they would stealthily remove the little ladder used by him for getting down from his shop, and place it against the stall of his rival on the opposite side. Jamalji coming to the edge of his shop would, as usual, make for the ladder, and have a fall, to the delight of his tormentors awaiting this event in a corner. Then there would be a volley of curses upon all and sundry, but the Borah, not much hurt, would soon pick himself up, and seeing the boys would inquire about the lost ladder. "Have we the ladder in our pockets, Jamalji?"

the ringleader would ask; "look about you and then foul your tongue." He would look about him, and noticing the ladder at the opposite shop-keeper's, would call that man to account. The naughty boys would then hasten to school, having had enough of mirth for the day.

A Caning and What Came of It.

But of all the naughty deeds of our hero, perhaps the naughtiest was his treatment of the new head-master of his school. It happened in this wise. Behram was a good pugilist and a good wrestler. He had strong muscles and strong bones, and his animal spirits, as the reader might have already concluded for himself, were abnormally high. While studying for the Fourth English Standard Test, he was one day, during the half-hour recess, challenged to force open a door held from the other side by four or five other boys. None of the boys knew that the hinges were rotten, and none therefore anticipated the catastrophe that was to ensue. Behram, accepting the challenge, pressed against the door with all his might, when

the hinges creaked, and the door all of a sudden gave way and fell down upon the poor boys on the other side with his own weight upon it. Fortunately, no serious injury was done, but the crash frightened the school masters. The new head-master, Mr. Jevachram (the old one had been transferred) was a rigid disciplinarian, though not an unjust man. The boys were marched up as criminals before him, and after a long trial he sentenced them to receive each a dozen stripes on the hand. Behram would not submit to this order. His other masters tried their influence with the head-master in his favour. But Mr. Jevachram, being a stickler for his authority, adhered to his decision, while Behram, equally obdurate, adhered to his own. At length Mr. Dosabhai procured a concession that the school-peon should not inflict the punishment on Behram—but Mr. Dosabhai himself. This was something, and Mr. Dosabhai in his most persuasive tone came up to the culprit, and "now my boy," said he, "you won't feel *my* caning you, would you? Do be a good boy, and hold out your hand." Behram held out his hand; but with the first stroke, the over-

sensitive lad was in a tremor and was about to fall down in a swoon. The masters were frightened and did their utmost to revive him. The boy did revive, but the first thing he did on coming to was to throw his books at poor Mr. Jevachram, and bolt. He had to descend a staircase of about thirty steps, but three or four plunges brought him to the landing, and he rushed frantically home to complain to his mother.

An Irreparable Loss and Its Lesson.

But his mother was laid up with cholera. She had had an attack some time previously and had recovered; that day she had experienced a relapse. To this day Malabari remembers the revulsion of feeling—call it rather a mental cyclone—which swept "the offending Adam" out of him, and sobered him down to the gravity and stillness which have since then been his main characteristic. I do not think that there was much dross in his nature. Those who know him as he is now can never believe that his instincts could have been other than good even in his boyhood. Boys of course will be boys—and who is there

among us who can blame him for being often up to a lark? But, unless I have misread him egregiously, I am sure he was a loveable boy. Indeed, the man who could not have loved this frank, genial, gifted little one, singing like a bird and pouring out his melody so freely, must have had little "music in his soul," and still less of human nature. Let us not, therefore, uncharitably judge the remorse-stricken boy for disobeying his master. Let us rather give him our best sympathy, while he is standing, shame-faced, crest-fallen, and almost dazed, beside his mother's bed.

I may mention here that in his tenth year, when Behram was most given to singing, and much in request on that account, his mother had got him to promise, after one of their quiet home talks, never to sing again, nor to go to professional singers. To this promise Behram has faithfully adhered. It was probably about this time, or a little later, that he betook himself to that course of self-discipline which has now culminated in the life of a recluse. About this time he also conceived a loathing for drink at the sight of a Panjaubi dancing girl, *Nuri*, lying dead-drunk one afternoon near

one of the gates of Surat. Nuri appeared to have been made to drink till she was practically dead, and then cruelly ill-used by Native soldiers. Behram's mother, with whom he was going towards the gate at the time, asked him to buy some curds, thrust them down the poor woman's throat, turned her on one side, and then left. The sight and the surrounding circumstances made a deep impression upon the boy's mind. Hence his hatred of the so-called regimental orders regulating vice of this kind.

Behram ministered to his dying parent as only such an affectionate son could, for two nights and three days. She was all in all to him, and she was dying. He could not go to bed even though his mother would implore him to take rest. He sits there fascinated—rubbing her feet and watching—watching—watching! At four o'clock in the evening of the third day her head and feet grow cold, then the chest, then the hands, one of which holds Behram's to the last. She hovers between life and death for half an hour, and then the boy first sees the sight of death. He does not weep—for the tears have frozen at

their fount and there is a mist before his eyes. He is not able to realize for some time that his mother, who had just now passed her hand over his head, is no more. He sits like a statue until the neighbours come and the body is removed. He follows it and returns with the neighbours, and sits again like a statue. "Next morning," he tells me, "I became an old man. All my past associations were discarded." *

* Bhikhibai was only thirty-three when she died. There is a touching allusion to her death in the "Indian Muse," pp. 86–87 :—

"One day the sun as his decline began,
Declined the sun of this my earthly span.
Her latest breath below my safety sought:
To bless her orphan was her dying thought.
No tear I shed, when first my loss I viewed;
My sense was smothered, and my soul subdued.
She'd clasped a child, with sad emotions wan;
But when the clasp relaxed, there was left a man."

YOUTH (1866–1876).

"THE prize is in the process! knowledge means
Ever renewed assurance by defeat
That victory is somehow still to reach:
But love is victory, the prize itself:
Love—trust to! Be rewarded for the trust,
In trust's mere act."

Browning's "Ferishtah's Fancies."

"As if there were sought in knowledge a couch whereupon to rest a searching and restless spirit; or a terrace for a wandering and variable mind to walk up and down with a fair prospect; or a tower of state for a proud mind to raise itself upon; or a fort or commanding ground for strife and contention; or a shop for profit or sale; and not a rich storehouse for the glory of the Creator, and the relief of man's estate.—*Bacon's* "Advancement of Learning."

"Half grown as yet, a child, and vain,
She cannot fight the fear of death.
What is she, cut from love and faith,
But some wild Pallas from the brain

Of demons? fiery hot to burst
All barriers in her onward race
For power. Let her know her place;
She is the second, not the first."

Tennyson's "In Memoriam."

CHAPTER II.

YOUTH (1866–1876).

MALABARI'S life may well be divided into three periods. The first period is one of play and song; the second of study and poetry; the third of politics, literature, and social reform. The third thus overlaps the second to some extent; but the division is convenient.

MALABARI A PUPIL AND A TUTOR.

With his mother's death, the orphan boy of twelve found himself friendless in the world, for Merwanji in his old age had become cantankerous, and was in straitened circumstances. Fortunately, the people in his street and thereabouts knew of the lad's astonishing powers, and so it came about that, although he was yet in pupilage himself, he found no difficulty in securing pupils, some of whom were his seniors in age. He, however, de-

voted only his mornings and evenings to their tuition, for he was himself now hungering and thirsting for knowledge, and was anxious to go to school again. The Anglo-vernacular School would have been only too glad to take him back, but he preferred to join the Irish Presbyterian Mission School, then under the supervision of the Rev. Mr. Dixon. Mr. Dixon, an exemplary Christian and a gentleman in the best sense of the word, took the boy by the hand, and gave him every encouragement. The head-master of the school, Mr. Navalkar, and also Mr. Motinarayan, thought highly of the new-comer and were very friendly. Thus, under sympathetic guidance, Behramji commenced his study of English in real earnest.

Mr. Dixon, as head of the school, used to teach Shakespeare to the boys in the first class. Behramji had been put in the third class, and was at this time in the second, but was, nevertheless, allowed the benefit of these lessons. This was a great privilege, and the boy was grateful for it. He made very rapid progress in speaking and understanding English, and one day surprised Mr. Dixon by giving a lucid explanation of a very difficult passage in

Shakespeare, which had puzzled the master himself. His admiring teacher foretold the boy's greatness, and heartily helped him in his pursuit of knowledge.

Malabari's Struggles.

But the pursuit of knowledge was no easy task to one situated as the poor boy was. Imagine a lonely orphan who, in his thirteenth year, has to earn his own livelihood, who has sometimes to cook for himself, who has none at home to speak to but a snappish old man, who has to attend his school from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and to school others often from 7 to 9 in the morning and 6 to 8 in the evening; and you have an idea of Malabari's hard lot in those days. He seldom slept more than four hours, for his nights alone were his own, and he spent many an hour in poring over the pages of Shakespeare and Milton, Wordsworth and Tennyson, Premanand and Akha, Samal Bhat and Dayaram. He was given to musing, and would often take up a scrap of paper to jot down those "short swallow-flights of song" which come so naturally to born poets. It is a remarkable fact that most of the Gu-

jarati poems in the "Niti Vinod" and several in the "Sarod-i-Ittifak" were composed about this time. On the whole, though chilled by poverty, Malabari at this period of his life was not quite unhappy, and he often longs to move again in those "shadowy thoroughfares of thought" and imagination, amidst which his prime was passed, to weave again the wreaths of poesy which were the delight of his youth, and to prove himself what Colonel Olcott once wished him to be, "the song-writing redeemer of his country."

Schoolboy Ambition.

This, however, is the dream of his after-life. In those hard days, when he was toiling for bread, his one ambition was to matriculate. This may look like an anti-climax, but it is a fact. Matriculation in 1866 was considered by many a young scholar as the be-all and end-all of study, and as an unfailing portal to preferment in Government and private service. Behramji set his heart on matriculating, and studied all the subjects prescribed for this examination, with commendable assiduity, except arithmetic. He could not

conquer his aversion to arithmetic, and used often to despair of passing the test on this account. But his teachers used to hearten him to his work by assuring him that he would make up the necessary marks in other subjects, if he only succeeded in securing the minimum number in the intractable science of calculation. This minimum number, however, proved tantalizingly unattainable for several years, as we shall see.

His Guardian Angels.

"I have somehow had more sympathy from the angels than from the brutes of my own sex —begging *your* pardon." So wrote Malabari some time ago. He speaks of many women, European and Native—Hindu, Mahomedan as well as Parsi—"who have been kind to me, kind as mother's milk." This was, I presume, in early life, for Malabari is not now a society man. He studied in the Mission School for about two years only, as he went up for his matriculation from the second class, but I have no doubt that the example of the good missionary who presided over it, and of his noble wife, deeply influenced the young

student's life. This is clear from his first book, which abounds with the loftiest sentiments, and from the tenor of his own life. Malabari still corresponds with Mrs. Dixon, now at Belfast, and with her son, a distinguished graduate of Dublin University, whom Malabari still remembers as "little Willie" of the happy mission-house. Mrs. Dixon had another child —a daughter—who died in her infancy at Surat, and whom her father followed shortly afterwards, lamented by the whole town. I have sometimes speculated as to what Malabari would have been if those benevolent men who founded the Irish Presbyterian Mission had never thought of India, and provided no mission school, or closed it on seeing no visible, tangible results. I feel little doubt that his good instincts would have asserted themselves sooner or later; but I have as little doubt that Mr. and Mrs. Dixon evoked and fostered these instincts much sooner than would otherwise have been the case.

There were other lady friends who often cheered the sadness of the lonely boy. He fondly recalls the days he spent at Munshi Lutfullah Khan's. Munshi Lutfullah, whose

"Autobiography" is well known, had a son, Fazal, who studied in the mission school and became a fast friend of Behram's. The two boys used often to spend their evenings together, and on those nights when Behramji had not to attend to his pupils, he enjoyed the pleasure of hearing Fazal's sister sing and play. She had a sorrow of her own, and perhaps felt drawn to the pensive orphan. The accomplished old Munshi was himself particularly fond of entertaining Behramji, Vijiashankar and other schoolboys who frequented his house. Malabari gratefully remembers the friendship of two of his own cousins, as also of several Parsi and Hindu ladies.

JIVAJI, THE GENEROUS JEW.

Nearly two years have now elapsed since that "dark day of nothingness" when Behramji's mother breathed her last. He is now fairly ready for his matriculation, though he is doubtful about his arithmetic. But there is no money forthcoming for his passage to Bombay, where the examination is to be held. Mr. Dixon tells him, "Mind, don't fail

to prosecute your studies after you matriculate. Draw upon me for money, if need be;" but the good Padre does not know that his favourite pupil almost despairs of going to Bombay for want of money. The boy is too proud, too sensitive to take a loan; but he is the admiration of his class, and his classmates know his circumstances. Curiously enough, help came to him from a quarter the least expected. There was an old Parsi gentleman, Jivaji, at Nanpura—a remarkable man, who had burnt his fingers in the Share Mania of 1864–65, but who had sufficient money to lend, especially to butchers. He was, however, by reputation, such a tight screw to deal with, that he had himself come to be nicknamed after the class with whom he had business relations. He was Malabari's opposite neighbour, and one of his sons was in the mission school. Learning how the case stood with the boy, old Jivaji behaved with a generosity which few would have given him credit for. He sent for the youth, wormed out his secret, and thrust Rs. 20 upon him. This was all that was wanted. "Don't be sad, my boy," said good old Jivaji, "your

honest face is security enough for my money," and he actually took no bond or note of hand. His confidence was eventually well rewarded. Meanwhile let us follow Behramji to Bombay. He had to pay Rs. 10 for the usual examination fee, and he required the remaining Rs. 10 for his passage. So with this little amount in his pocket, and with a little bed and a few books, he left Surat for the capital of the Presidency.

At the Door of a Bombay Dives.

Behramji was barely fifteen when he came to Bombay, and so green was he that he did not realize the enormous gulf between the rich and the poor in that great city. He knew how Jivaji had treated him, but he forgot that Jivaji had started in life with perhaps a couple of rupees, and had known what it was to be poor. Our Surati *ingénue* had heard of a rich Parsi at Bombay, and had read some of his public utterances and of his public charities. Surely such a man would be but too glad to help an orphan. Old Merwanji was very unhappy owing to the mortgage of his house. He had found out the sterling worth of his

adopted son, and this latter on his side was anxious to see the house redeemed. It was a matter of Rs. 300 only, and surely a boy ready for his matriculation, with such excellent testimonials from Messrs. Curtis and Dixon, could get this trifle on his word of honour from a sympathising benefactor. He would pay it back with interest. So one day, pocketing his pride for the sake of old Merwanji, Behramji presents himself at the door of the public-spirited Parsi Dives. He is called in, and modestly states his case. The reply is a withering smile and an offer of a cup of tea. But the young man, who had thought so much of his word of honour and read so much of the brotherhood of men, finding his cup of hope dashed to pieces, turns his back on the man of the world and is off. This was one of his first experiences at Bombay. "I felt too stunned even to be able to give him the parting salaam," writes Malabari. "I never met him since but once, when he was in need of my good offices. Little did the Sheth* know that the man whom he paid such lavish attentions was the same who had

* An honorary epithet given to bankers and rich men.

come to him for a little loan to help his adoptive father. I do not blame him now; perhaps he had been deceived by others before I appealed to him."

Arithmetic Revenges Itself.

But a sadder disappointment was in store for him. He failed in arithmetic on going up for the examination. He did well in all the other subjects, but had to give up in despair some of the hard nuts from Colenso which he was asked to crack. Had it been possible to solve a puzzle of decimal fractions with Gujarati or English poetry, our hero would have easily scored the highest number of marks. But there was as little poetry in arithmetic as in the Parsi Dives he had encountered. He had a bulky bundle of poems in English as well as in Gujarati, but then who would believe that a mite of a boy could be a poet? He had no patron and no friends. He had put up at Bombay with a relation of Merwanji's, and must now either return to Surat, or make up his mind to draw on Mr. Dixon. He was, however, soon helped out of these embarrassments.

A Good Samaritan.

While at Surat, Behramji had given free lessons to several boys. One of these was a son of a Parsi lady who was his mother's friend. This lady had a brother in Bombay, Dr. Rastomji Bahadurji, and had commended Behramji to his care. Well, Dr. Bahadurji, who rather liked this shy little stranger from Surat, came to the boy's rescue, and introduced him to the owner of the Parsi Proprietary School in the Fort, who was so pleased with the boy's English and general acquirements, that he formed a new class for him. He had to start with only Rs. 20 a month; but after a few months he was promoted to a post of Rs. 40, and then to one of Rs. 60. The young man also took pupils privately, and was able soon to make between Rs. 100 and Rs. 150 from tuitions alone. Behramji was no longer oppressed by poverty.

A Narrow Escape.

But a new danger turned up at this stage. Having now a moderate income, he was an eligible son-in-law; and the wife of the rela-

tion with whom he had lived for a year from the date of his arrival, was a great match-maker. She had a widowed sister, older than Behramji, and she didn't see why these two should not be a happy couple. But Behramji was not quite a greenhorn now, and had eyes to see and understanding to judge for himself. He declined the offer with thanks, and quietly removed to other lodgings.

MATRICULATES—AT LAST.

Mr. Kavasji Banaji had offered our poet-pedagogue Rs. 40 a month for teaching his son, and Behramji now became a lodger in his house. He was also for a while with Mr. Kavasji Bisney. After some time he commenced to live on his own hook in a house in Dhobi Talao, rented for Rs. 20 a month, and then in another in Hanuman Lane, Fort. All this time he had not forgotten his matriculation. He had failed first in 1868; he failed again in 1869, and for the third time in 1870. But at last, in 1871, the goddess of integers and fractions had pity upon the persevering young votary and pulled him safely through

his ordeal. He was no longer an orphan now in the educational service.

The Rev. Van Someren Taylor and Dr. John Wilson.

If sorrows come in battalions, joys also sometimes come in a goodly band. Behramji had borne the shock of the battalions bravely. Poverty, the loss of his mother, his repeated failure in the matriculation test, were all so many "blows of circumstance" which he had courageously breasted. And now a better day dawned upon him, and he emerged from his obscurity. One of his examiners had been the Rev. Mr. Taylor, whose name is still a household word in Gujarat. He was the author of a standard Gujarati Grammar and some Gujarati poems. Behramji had heard a great deal about him, and one day, mustering courage, took his own Gujarati poems to him. They were in a neat manuscript, written like print, and Mr. Taylor, turning over the pages, and struck with the beauty of the verses, exclaimed—"Do you mean to say you have had this for three years and it has not yet been printed?" No, of course not. It had

not been printed, and was not to be printed for some years yet. But Mr. Taylor's encouraging words put new life into the author, and by Mr. Taylor he was introduced to one who moulded his life and shaped his ends in a remarkable degree. This was the great linguist, the devoted missionary, and the enlightened educationist—the Rev. Dr. John Wilson.

Dr. Wilson read Behramji's little volume, found the versification "remarkably good," and the ideas expressed indicative of "poetical imagination," stood sponsor to the book, named it the "Niti Vinod" ("The Pleasures of Morality"), and exerted himself in its favour. The Director of Public Instruction subscribed for three hundred copies, Sir Cowasji Jenhangir Readymoney for seventy-five, and several others followed the example. The book nevertheless came out only in 1875. This requires an explanation, and I give it with reluctance, because I shall have to say that Behramji carried as little of the spirit of calculation into his life as he did into his examination; in other words, to praise him for what he does not wish to be pro-

claimed or praised. The truth is, his earnings, except what he sent to Merwanji and what he spent on books and sometimes on good cheer, went to others—some of them, I am afraid, idlers, who imposed upon the young donor. He had even borrowed money to relieve their necessities. This was one cause of the delay. Another was that he was shy and knew nothing about printers and publishers. At length, however, he overcame these difficulties with the aid of his friend, Mr. Shapurji Dadabhai Bhabha. But before the firstborn of his genius came into the world, an important event took place, which I must not pass over.

Marriage.

This was his marriage in his twenty-first year. My fair readers, if I should have the good fortune to have any, will ask several questions, but they had better put them to Mrs. Malabari, for I cannot answer them. I shall, however, try to satisfy their legitimate curiosity. Was she pretty? Yes. Was she young? Yes, only nineteen. Where did the two meet? Why, in the house of Malabari's

landlady, close to Malabari's own lodgings. Was there any courtship? A short one. Was it an affair of the heart? Both thought so. At any rate, it was not a question of money—there was no dower and no settlement. All that could be gathered now is that it was a matter of intense devotion on one side and intense pity on the other. Was the marriage celebrated in the orthodox style? Yes. I think this much ought to suffice.

The "Niti Vinod."

By a fortunate coincidence, Malabari brought out the "Niti Vinod" about the time his first child was born. In a short time a second edition was called for. It was the first work of the first Parsi poet; * but it had other merits.

The Gujarati of the "Niti Vinod" is not Parsi Gujarati, but Hindu Gujarati. The two in many respects differ as much as Hindustani and Hindi. Malabari, thanks to his association with the minstrels and the *khialis*, and his study of pure Gujarati poets, had obtained a wonderful mastery over Hindu Gujarati. From the Shah-nameh he had gone over to

* *Rast Goftar.*

the homely vein indigenous to Gujarat—the creation of Narsi Mehta, Premanand, and other Gujarati bards, whom he had in his boyish days heard interpreted at night by a Brahmin to mixed Hindu audiences, men and women. His mother, who was always on the best of terms with her Hindu neighbours, used to attend these readings, and he used to go with her. This was the beginning of his lifelong attachment to Gujarati literature. He took it up very early for a regular study, especially on the metrical side, in which the literature of Gujarat, and really the whole Hindu literature, is the richest. His favourite authors were Dayaram, Premanand, and Akha, "the last for aphoristic wisdom and manly spirit, the second for dignity and true poetic sentiment, and Dayaram for his luscious sweetness and captivating imagery."† He was also very fond of Kabir, Nannik, Dadu, and other poet-saints endowed with plenty of the "saving grace of common sense." A natural gift, so diligently cultivated, could not but produce the very best poetic style.

† Private letter.

There is another thing remarkable in the "Niti Vinod." It is the bewildering number and variety of the metres employed. I am afraid the title of the book is forbidding. It would lead Englishmen to suppose that it is something like Pope's "Moral Essays" or Tupper's prosaic verses, or at the most, like Rogers' "Pleasures of Memory" or Campbell's "Pleasures of Hope." But the "Niti Vinod" is almost wholly lyrical. There are few pieces in it which are not pure songs.

The book is divided into five parts—moral subjects, miscellaneous subjects, questions and answers, short lives of great men, and religious subjects. The first part takes up only thirty-seven pages out of 215, and deals with such subjects as Youth, Friendship, Flattery, Jealousy, Swearing, Procrastination, Idleness, Drunkenness, Sensuality, Worldliness, Suicide, and Death. But even this purely moral portion is full of gems, such as the piece which tells us what things are good to buy in the market of life, and that other which shows how to prepare to meet death patiently. In this part also there is a faithful and artistic translation of the Indian schoolboy's favourite

—"You are old, Father William." Father William becomes "Kaka Karsanji" in Gujarati, but acquits himself in it as well as in English. There is also "a word of advice to the body," which is worth reproducing as a whole. I quote the refrain of the song, which may one day pass into a popular saying, at least with the Salvationists :—

"Dunyá ulat sulat che khel
Sátún mukti nún múshkel." *

The third part contains pithy answers to such questions as "Why God gives happiness?" "Who is truly happy?" "Who is the true hero?" "Where is God?" "Who is the true God?" "Who should weep?" "Who should laugh?" "Whose wife is a widow?" and so on.

The "Short Lives of Great Men" commence with Mr. Dixon, whose untimely death is deplored in pathetic verse.

"Garibo bhanáve, suníti shikháve
Pashú bál ne je ghadimán rijháve
Gayo svarge sádhú kharo úpkárí
Vidiá máta rotí pharéchhe bichárí." †

* "The world is a game of ups and downs,
The bargain of salvation is a difficult one."

† He who taught the poor, inculcated morality, won the

Then follow the first Napoleon Buonaparte, Karsandas Mulji, Lady Avanbai (the first Lady Jamsetji Jijibhoy), Nelson, Wellington, Sir Jamsetji Jijibhoy (the first Parsi baronet), Prince Albert, Jagannath Sankarsett, Rustomji Jamsetji Jijibhoy, T. C. Anstey, and lastly, Dr. Bhau Daji. There are also a couple of other poems, one on the murder of Lord Mayo, and the other on the calamities which befell the third Napoleon.

The fifth part treats of salvation, devotion to God, prayer, and like topics from the point of view of a pure theist. The language is very terse, limpid, and musical, and the thoughts are as pure as Keshub Chunder Sen's.

But decidedly the best poems in the book are to be found in the second part, and of all his best poems, the pathetic ones on the woes of enforced widowhood and the horrors of infant marriage * are the very best. Here is one of them :—

hearts of little children in a moment—he, the true saint and philanthropist, is gone to heaven, and the bereaved Mother Learning wanders about weeping.

* The headings of some of the pieces on these subjects may be mentioned:—"How to Relieve Bharat Khand (India) of Woman's Curse;" "Contrast between the Condition of Hindu Women in Ancient and Modern Times;" "Advice to the

"He hina-hathilá, jama játilá, hilatila kema karó?
Shubha avasara páse, ve'mo ná'se, kan jitaáshe, jútha varo?
Sau dukhí abaláne, marada-bhaláne, satapáláne, sonpí do,
Jagasukhahin nári, garíb bichári, bedi akári, kápí do.
A-'desha sudharshe, ridha sidha vadhashe, pápa utarshe, chhút didhe,
Dinabandhu ke'she, desha videshe, kírati re'she, ám kidhe;
Je hashe akarmi, puro adharmí, vipati garmí, nahi talashe,
Jo ishwarjáyá, karshe sáhya, to ishmáyá, jhat malashe
Pashu bála kapáye, udarmánhe, nahi nikláe, mána vati,
Baní máta niráshi, niráshaphánsi, ghále trási, krúra mati
Manamá bahú lágé, baltánáge; vidhwá máge, sukha radi,

Leaders of Hindu Caste;" "A Heartbroken Lady's Lament;" "A Supplication to the Hindu Mahajan;" "The Sorrows of a Widow on the Death of her Husband;" "An Erring Widow's Prayer to God;" "A Widow's Prayer to her Father;" "The Sorrows resulting from Infant Marriage." The first four lines of this last song run as follows:—

"Pita bachapanthi na parnavo re
Jaldí kháo na lagan no lavo
Pita, &c.
Prabhu kero didhel hawalo re, tene dhíraj thi sanbháló re
Pachí va'lí hoe ke vá'lo
Pita, &c."

"Fathers, do not marry your children in infancy;
Do not be in a hurry to enjoy the pleasures of a marriage (in your family).
(Children are) a sacred charge from God;
Rear them with patience, whether they be daughters or sons."

Bèhrám vicharun, chále márún, to ugárún, ája ghadi."*

To appreciate the beauty and melody of this piece, as also its warmth of denunciation, one should have it sung, and then he would see what deep earnestness has been

* Read á as in all, o as in lo, a as in attempt, u as in bull, ú as oo in fool, i as in British, í as ee in eel. The verses may be loosely translated as follows :—

"Oh, ye God-forsaken, perverse fiends of caste, why make you these shuffling, shambling excuses ?

Good times are near ; superstitions must now flee. Why (at such a time) do you wed untruth to obtain a (fictitious) victory (over truth) ?

Entrust all unhappy women to the care of men good and true.

Cut off the miserable fetters of poor weak woman desirous of worldly happiness.

This country will improve, (its) weal and bliss will increase, sins will go away, if you liberate (widows from their thraldom).

He who does this will be called the friend of the poor; his fame will spread in his country and in foreign lands.

He who is an evil-doer and utterly irreligious, *his* fire of misery will never be removed.

But heaven-born beings rendering help (to the helpless) will soon attain God's grace.

Poor (innocent) infants are cut off in the womb—cannot see the light of day with any welcome.

The mother, becoming hopeless, casts the noose of despair (on the infant) through fear, and with a hardened heart

Burning in the flames (of sorrow); the widow, with her heart in distress, weepingly asks for relief.

I, Behram, think, if I had the power, I would save her this very moment."

The mention of the poet's name in the last line is usual in such songs.

infused into it. Indeed, it is the young poet's depth of feeling, almost phenomenal, which is the most salient feature of his work. This will not appear at all surprising to those well acquainted with Malabari, for he is by nature extremely sympathetic, and his is not a "painless sympathy with pain." "When I see a lame person," he once wrote, "I feel lame for a moment; when a blind person, I feel blinded. I feel corresponding pain or loss in witnessing it. When I first look at a leper or other foully diseased object I feel a shiver, but the feeling passes off, and I have tended many diseased persons." * We have seen how quick his mother's hands were unto good, and there is very little doubt that Malabari inherits his ready benevolence from her.

In this second part there are numerous other subjects discussed. For example, we have a graphic, but chaste, description of what an innocent Hindu girl saw at a sensual Vaishnava Maharaja's; a touching lament by a husband who has lost a good wife; an amusing analysis of the thoughts of the superstitious regarding the Kali Age; an appeal to

* From a letter.

Banais to educate their children; a scathing condemnation of the high-pressure system pursued in children's schools; besides several purely English topics, like the bravery of the English sailor, and our Queen's sorrow on the death of her Consort. This last is a most spirited piece of composition.

It may be asked why Dr. Wilson named the book "Niti Vinod" when the bulk of it dealt with other subjects than morality. But the truth is, that a profoundly religious and moral tone pervades the whole work, and its tendency is certainly to bring home to the reader the delights of virtue and the miseries of vice. Even before he came in contact with Dr. Wilson, Behramji was a "prayerful animal," * and it was his earnestness, as much as his precocious genius, that made him so attractive to Dr. Wilson. The burden of many of his songs is a simple lesson—"*Do* good"; and in various ways, and with considerable originality and freshness, he enforces that—

"The gods hear men's hands before their lips,
And heed beyond all crying and sacrifice
Light of things done, and noise of labouring men."

* From a letter.

How the "Niti Vinod" was Received.

The "Niti Vinod" appeared with some capital testimonials. One Hindu scholar certified that "the poetry was without prosodical defects;" another that "the language was natural and the style graceful;" while the Parsi High Priest went into raptures over the "pure Gujarati verses" and stated that they had "no precedent." The book was received by the vernacular press generally with equally hearty praise. The *Rast Goftar* welcomed it as the production of the first "genuine poet" among the Parsis, who had expressed his sentiments "in pure Gujarati" and in "sweet and beautiful verses." The *Shamsher Bahadur* was struck most with his "sweet and harmonious versification" and his "deep moral tone." The *Vidya Mitra* wrote: "We are glad to see that, though a Parsi, the author has succeeded in writing such polished and harmonious lines in Gujarati. The different metres seem to us to be faultless in their construction; and most of the lines smooth and graceful. Some passages are really of the highest order. Some subjects have been most graphically treated;

while in other lines the author displays the powers of a painter." The *Gujarat Mitra* was likewise very appreciative. "There is hardly a page," it said, "in which we do not meet with lines which are very good and creditable, and the metre is faultless. Looking to the composition and the language of the verses, one would irresistibly be led to believe that they were the production of a learned Hindu writer; he would hardly think a Parsi capable of such chaste and classical language. We pray that this gentleman may go on making the same laudable use of his pen."

The reviewers in the English press were no less eulogistic. The book was "an agreeable surprise" to the *Indian Statesman*, and recommended by it "as a fit text to be placed in the hands of students and introduced as a reading book in families." The *Bombay Gazette* noticed that the young poet had "displayed an amount of observation which is seldom to be found in works of native authors," and that he was equally "at home in didactic, humorous and pathetic poetry." The *Times of India* regarded the book as an attempt "to infuse into the Eastern mind something of the lofty

tone of thought and feeling which distinguishes the most approved literary productions of the West," and in reviewing the second edition that journal wrote: "These verses display to great advantage the author's wonderful command over pure Hindu Gujarati. But that is not their only merit. They evince considerable originality and reflect a lofty tone of moral teaching. We cannot withhold our admiration of Mr. Malabari's success in the line of study he has adopted." To crown all these plaudits of the press, two living Gujarati poets welcomed him heartily to their ranks. Kavi Shivlal Dhaneshwar wrote: "Such wide acquaintance with Gujarati, such beauty of versification, and such a delightful combination of sentiment and imagination would do honour to the pen of an accomplished Hindu poet." And Kavi Dalpatram Dayabhai wrote: "It is a general belief amongst us that Parsis cannot excel in versification, through the medium of correct and idiomatic Gujarati; but Mr. Malabari's 'Niti Vinod' effectually dispels that belief. It will be a proud day for Gujarat when the odious distinction between Parsi Gujarati and Hindu Gujarati ceases to exist. I concur with the

opinions that several competent critics have given of the book, and hope it will meet with greater success than before." There are pieces in the "Niti Vinod" which will live so long as the vernacular of Gujarat endures. Among their special merits may be mentioned a striking originality, both of thought and expression, and a simplicity and spiritual grace in which Gujarati literature appears to be very poor. I believe many of these poems will bear an English translation; they ought certainly to be introduced into the school curriculum.

Probably the earliest of Malabari's literary friends at Bombay is Mr. Mansukhram Suryaram, well known as a Vedant scholar and author of numerous books in Gujarati, written with the object of enriching that vernacular and improving the taste of the reading public. Mr. Mansukhram was the first Gujarati Hindu to advise and encourage the author of "Niti Vinod." The acquaintance, which began at Mr. Taylor's, has ripened into friendship; and many are the literary and educational subjects in which these friends take a common interest. Malabari speaks highly of the valuable aid given him by Mr. Mansukhram in getting up

the translations of Max Müller's "Hibbert Lectures." What he prizes more, however, is the fact that this sympathy between an intellectual Brahman and an emotional Parsi in India should have been created by a Christian missionary from Ireland!

In the Bombay Small Cause Court.

The "Niti Vinod" was a success,* and one would think Malabari was happy. But his life has been truly a "pendulum between a smile and a tear," and just when he was drinking in the delicious compliments of the press and of his brother-poets, he found himself summoned to answer a suit in the Court of Small Causes. It was brought by a person who was under deep obligations to Malabari, and who should have been the last to bring it. He had been a teacher at the same school where Malabari was still teaching, and having a large family had often been assisted by Malabari. But he was a nettle who ought not to have been so tenderly treated. He had been made to leave

* There must have been some critics who could not have found anything good in the book; but I am sorry I have not been able to get at their reviews.

the school, and now filed an action to recover Rs. 200 as commission for the sale of the "Niti Vinod," for the collection of subscriptions, and for other services rendered in connection with the book, including the revision of the verses themselves. This last count almost maddened our young poet, and, though extremely shy, he resolved to contest the claim. Moreover, Rs. 200 was a large sum, and Malabari following the Biblical maxim that the love of money was a root of all kinds of evil, and having an itch for giving away which amounted almost to a disease, was unable to pay even one-half of it. Fortunately, the judge was a discerning and patient man, and saw through the plaintiff as he gave his evidence in the witness-box. His witnesses also deserted the plaintiff, when they found the case going against him. The revising charge was withdrawn, and the plaintiff got a decree for Rs. 30, and a reprimand for his sharp practice. The thirty rupees were awarded by the court for service rendered in obtaining subscriptions, a service for which Malabari had offered him Rs. 60 before the case was taken to the court. Thus our author tasted his first and last law-suit, to which the reader of

"Gujarat and Gujaratis" is indebted for the very amusing "Scenes in a Small Cause Court."

The Mehtaji, however, had his revenge. He prompted a Hindu paper to repeat the calumny he had withdrawn. Malabari had had a plentiful share of the ills that assail the life of a struggling poet; he had had toil and want, the garret and a Small Cause Court suit, and he was not to escape the worst of all these ills—envy. He, however, silenced his adversaries by offering to compose as good verses as could be found in the "Niti Vinod," under any conditions prescribed by them. The challenge was not accepted, and Malabari was left in peace to bring out a second edition, and to publish his "Indian Muse in English Garb."

"The Indian Muse in English Garb."

I have said that Malabari, when he came to Bombay, had some English poems with him in manuscript. To compose verses in a foreign language is no easy matter, but Malabari has natural gifts. He has an ear for rhyme and rhythm which few have. He is

extremely responsive to good music, and bad music frets his nerves and makes him unhappy. He had read a good deal of English poetry, and had his favourites. "Wordsworth," he once wrote,* "is a favourite of my soul and intellect; Shelley, Byron and Burns of my heart. Shakespeare and Milton I *admire* most, but there is something intensely practical in the former, and something awfully stilted in the latter, that keeps one from *loving* them quite." On another occasion he said:—"I have ranged aimlessly over a very wide field of poesy, English as well as Indian in several vernaculars; also Persian and Greek translated. But ask me to quote ten lines accurately even from my favourites, and you might as well knock me down. I could tell whose lines they are; sometimes I feel as if I could improve upon the original in a turn of thought or expression. But I could not quote by the yard, as most of my schoolfellows used to do in the class-room, and as most of them do even now. I cannot quote my own verses, except the refrains and some special favourites here and there. But I am

* In a letter.

a fairly good reader, and may read myself entirely into the writer's frame of mind whilst at the same time entering fully into the character depicted.

"As to English masters, Shakespeare was my daily companion during school-days, and a long while after that. Much of my worldly knowledge I owe to this greatest of seers and practical thinkers. Milton filled me with awe. Somehow, I used to feel unhappy when the turn came for 'Paradise Lost.' His torrents of words frightened me as much by their stateliness as by monotony. Nor could I sympathize with some of the personal teachings of this grand old singer. Wordsworth is my philosopher, Tennyson* my poet. I have given away hundreds of volumes after a perusal. But a little book of selections from the Laureate's earlier poems I have kept jealously for over twenty years. Amongst my many prizes at school I remember having received a very bulky volume named 'Selections from British Poets,' carried home for me by an older

* There is a beautiful translation of the song in the "Princess," "Home they brought her warrior dead," in Malabari's "Sarod Ittifak."

companion. I used to dip into this unwieldy folio, and got to know a little of Chaucer, Spenser, and other stars, earlier as well as later, through it. At school I had Campbell for another favourite; preferred Dryden to Pope, and Scott to several of his greater contemporaries. Cowper and Goldsmith I have always valued as dear old school-masters; Byron and Burns as boon companions when in the mood; Shelley and Keats as explorers of dreamland, who fascinate one by their subtle fancies. But having become more of a worker, I seldom go back now to the dreamers or the laughers and scoffers. 'Life is real, life is earnest'—that reminds me of the great American whom I cultivated a little during the seventies. There are others, Eastern and Western, whose acquaintance I could claim. How precious their memory!"

Malabari more or less studied the works of these poets, but he read many more. English numbers, he found, came to him almost as easily as Gujarati, and so, in 1876, he published his "Indian Muse," and dedicated it to one who had done so much for her

sisters in India—Miss Mary Carpenter. Before rushing into print, he showed some specimens of his poetry to Dr. Wilson, whose loss he keenly deplores in the verses headed: "To the memory of one of the noblest friends of India." Dr. Wilson's opinion was that the lines "displayed an uncommonly intimate knowledge of the English language," and were "the outcome of a gifted mind, trained to habits of deep meditation and fresh and felicitous expression." The good doctor also spoke of the author as "a young man of most excellent character and talents, and of rare literary accomplishments." Few knew the young man so well as this venerable scholar. Even in his boyish days, Malabari used often to sing to himself in a meditative spirit, and though he gave up singing after his mother's death, he did not give up meditating. The influence of Dr. Wilson on his character was very great. He was already earnest, but Dr. Wilson made him more so. He was already prayerful, but Dr. Wilson chastened his prayers. The two used at times to pray together, with another young Parsi, and whenever Dr. Wilson was ill or fatigued, he

loved to hear his young friends read to him the Psalms of David, and some of Bishop Heber's beautiful poems.* They had had many religious discussions, and Dr. Wilson had put forth all his learning, eloquence, and zeal to win over his favourite to Christ. Looking back to those days, Malabari often wonders how he escaped becoming a Christian. His main difficulty was, he tells me, the need of a Mediator. He believed in salvation by faith and by work, but did not think the mediation of another absolutely necessary for salvation. I imagine his heart was as much against changing his religion as his understanding. Bunsen places Zoroaster at least six thousand years before Christ, and the oldest Gatha of the Avesta says about this great Prophet—"Good is the thought, good is the speech, good is the work of the pure Zarathushtra," and quotes a saying of his, "I have entrusted my soul to heaven, and I will teach what is pure so long as I live." A pure, ancient, hereditary creed, with its hallowed associations, its historical grandeur,

* "A dying man to his soul," at page 24 of the "Indian Muse," was suggested to Malabari when so employed.

its touching memories of persecution and tribulation, would naturally have a greater attraction for a poetic mind than a foreign faith. Zoroastrianism, like its sister—some say its mother, and others, its daughter—Vedism, has been debased by later corruptions, but Malabari looked to its essence, and not to its accidents. He did not care for ceremonials of any kind, and his real prayer was "to think well, to speak well, to act well." He bowed to that Truth which includes all creeds and transcends all. He read or recited, five times a day, little gems of thought which are commentaries on the original texts, and the under-lying sentiment of which is the worship of the Creator through the noblest of His works, like the Sun and the Sea. Malabari is still the prayerful poet he was in 1876. He has still the same habits. He is not an orthodox Parsi, but a primitive Zoroastrian. None, therefore, need feel surprise that he withstood Dr. Wilson's powerful attempts to convert him. His companion and class-brother, Shapurji Dadabhai Bhabha, embraced Christianity after fearful persecutions, and is now

a Licentiate of Divinity and a Doctor of Medicine, practising in London. Shapurji and our Behramji were like twin brothers. The latter stood by his friend amid all his trials. "If anything *could* have made me a Christian," Malabari once told me, "it was Shapurji's example." "His faithfulness to Christ and his fortitude were most edifying. Dr. Wilson loved Shapurji as a son, and I myself owe much of Dr. Wilson's kindly regard to Shapurji. I look upon Shapurji's family as my own. His father is one of the worthiest, and yet one of the most unlucky, men I have known."

But though Malabari did not become a Christian in form, he is not one of those who think lightly of Christ, or who take a gloomy view of the work of Christian missionaries. This is what he said about them in replying to a passage in Mr. Wordsworth's letter on Hindu social reform :—

"And how much do we owe to Christian missionaries? We are indebted to them for the first start in the race for intellectual emancipation. It is to them that we are beholden for some of our most cherished

political and social acquisitions. Our very Brahmo Samaja, Arya Samaja and Prarathna Samaja are the offshoots, in one sense, of this beneficent agency. And, apart from its active usefulness, the Christian mission serves as a buffer for the tide of scepticism usually inseparable from intellectual emancipation. At a time when doubt and distrust are taking the place of reasoned inquiry among the younger generation of India, I feel bound to acknowledge in my own person the benefits I have derived from a contact with the spirit of Christianity. But for that holy contact I could scarcely have grown into the staunch and sincere Zoroastrian that I am, with a keen appreciation of all that appeals readily to the intelligence and a reverent curiosity for what appeals to the heart, knowing full well that much of what is mysterious to man is not beneath, but beyond, the comprehension of a finite being."

A similar generous feeling inspires his poem, To the Missionaries of Faith," in the "Indian Muse."

Malabari is himself a missionary. Turn to his poems, turn to his prose, turn to the life

he is living; and you feel he is a missionary with a definite mission. The "Indian Muse" has something to say on the celebrated "Fuller Case," on the treatment of Malharao Gaekwar, on the time of famine, on the glories of the West, and on the British character. But the poet is at home when describing the woes of widows and social tyrannies. He has a stirring poem in imitation of Campbell's "Men of England," which can only be fully appreciated by those who know what Rajput chivalry, what Aryan "chastity of honour," was in days of yore, and how low their descendants have fallen in these days. His own ideal is a very high one, and he has kept true to it through all his troubles and sad experiences. This appears from the last poem in his book, "Manhood's Dream," and it forms a fitting conclusion to this chapter. Here it is :—

"O life is but a stagnant sea, a weary trackless main;
Its waves, if undisturbed for long, the soul with poison stain.
The glory of good work it is our better part can save;
I'll rush to glory deathless, then, to glory or the grave!
The ice of silence will the soul to selfish languor freeze;

While mine is yearning for some work of merit here she sees;
So fly to works of charity and love, my spirit brave,
To glory bear me on thy wings—to glory or the grave!
There's Pleasure luring me to ruin; I'll ne'er the siren heed;
If once my soul is wrecked, she's naught but shame to wed indeed.
But no, I'd honest death prefer to being Pleasure's knave;
So up and on to glory, soul,—to glory or the grave!"

MANHOOD (1876–1891).

"How well in thee appears
The constant service of the antique world,
When service sweat for duty, not for meed!
Thou art not for the fashion of these times,
When none will sweat, but for promotion;
And, having that, do choke their service up,
Even with the having."

Shakespeare's "As You Like It."

And he, shall he,
"Man, her last work, who seemed so fair,
Such splendid purpose in his eyes,
Who rolled the psalm to wintry skies,
Who built him fanes of fruitless prayer—

Who trusted God was love indeed,
And love Creation's final law,
Though Nature, red in tooth and claw,
With ravine shrieked against his creed—

Who loved, who suffered countless ills,
Who battled for the True, the Just—
Be blown about the desert dust,
Or sealed within the iron hills?"

Tennyson's "In Memoriam."

'Thronging through the cloud-rift, whose are they, the faces
Faint revealed, yet sure divined, the famous ones of old?
'What'—they smile—'our names, our deeds so soon erases
Time upon his tablet where Life's glory lies enrolled?
Was it for mere fool's play, make-believe and mumming,
So we battled it like men, not boy-like sulked or whined,
Each of us heard clang God's 'come,' and each was coming:
Soldiers all, to forward face, not sneaks to lag behind!"

Browning's "Ferishtah's Fancies."

"Lives of great men all remind us,
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us,
Footprints on the sands of time."

Longfellow.

CHAPTER III.

MANHOOD (1876–1891).

Fame.

The "Indian Muse" made Malabari famous, and secured him many friends. Professor Wordsworth praised his "skill in versification" and "the sentiments expressed" in his verses. Mr. Gibbs congratulated him "on having produced poems superior to any I have yet seen from the pen of a Native author." Mr. E. B. Eastwick, the veteran scholar and Orientalist, "hailed the appearance of a true poet and master-mind in India." William Benjamin Carpenter acknowledged "the tribute of affectionate respect" paid to his sister, and Mr. J. Estlin Carpenter wrote :—

"I have often been surprised at the knowledge of the English language and literature displayed by some of your countrymen; but your verses indicate an even com-

pleter mastery, and exhibit a quite remarkable power of fulfilling the numerous and complex requirements of poetical composition. . . . .

"Your lines to Wordsworth prove that you have found your way into the secret of perhaps the deepest poetic influence of this century, and I rejoice to learn that his profound teachings thus make their way into wholly new modes of thought and feeling with penetrating sympathy.

"Throughout your verses I recognize the same high tone of aspiration which your dedication leads your readers to expect; and I heartly congratulate you on this early and rich promise of poetic skill."

Miss Florence Nightingale was touched by many of the pieces, and ended her letter with a blessing—

"May God bless your labours! May the Eternal Father bless India, bless England, and bring us together as one family, doing each other good. May the fire of His love, the sunshine of His countenance, inspire us all!"

The late lamented Lord Shaftesbury bore witness "to the excellence of the work, the high character of its poetry, and its sentiments." Mr John Bright read the book with interest, and wrote:—

"I thank you too for your good wishes for myself. I fear it is not possible for any Englishman to do much for your unhappy country. The responsibility of England with regard to India is too great—it cannot adequately be discharged.

Max Müller acknowledged a copy with the following letter :—

"I am much obliged to you for your kind present. It is certainly highly creditable to you to be able to write English verse. To me also English is an acquired language, but I have never attempted more than English prose. However, whether we write English verse or English prose, let us never forget that the best service we can render is to express our truest Indian or German thoughts in English, and thus to act as honest interpreters between nations that ought to understand each other much better than they do at present.

". . . Depend upon it, the English public, at least the better part of it, like a man who is what he is. The very secret of the excellence of English literature lies in the independence, the originality and truthfulness of English writers. . . . It is in the verses where you feel and speak like a true Indian that you seem to me to speak most like a true poet.

"Accept my best thanks and good wishes, and believe me

"Yours sincerely,

"F. Max Müller."

The Poet Laureate also sent a most encouraging little note.

"My Dear Sir,—I return my best thanks for your 'Indian Muse in English Garb.' It is interesting, and more than interesting, to see how well you have managed in your English garb.

"I wish I could read the poems which you have written in your own vernacular; for, I doubt not, they deserve all the praise bestowed upon them by the newspapers.

"Believe me,

"Your far-away but sincere friend,

"A. TENNYSON."

The Crown Princess of Germany and Her Majesty the Queen-Empress communicated to him their gracious thanks, and the Princess Alice, through Baron Knesebeck, wrote as follows:—

"H.R.H. The Grand Duchess of Hesse has ordered me to express Her Royal Highness' most sincere thanks for the copy of your 'Indian Muse.'

"Her Royal Highness has read a part of the poems with deep interest; and it afforded Her Royal Highness great pleasure to see a foreigner write English with so much taste and feeling, and the expression of such loyal sentiments.

"Her Royal Highness equally appreciates the motives which prompted you to dedicate to Miss Carpenter the work, which Her Royal Highness accepts with the greatest pleasure.

All these honours brought our poet into great prominence. Sir Cowasji Jehanghir Readymoney had become his friend long before the publication of the "Indian Muse," and

by him and by Dr. Wilson, Malabari had been introduced to the highest functionaries as well as to influential citizens. Had the young poet been ambitious or sordid-minded, he could have easily made a name for himself and won a fortune in other walks than those of literature or journalism. But Malabari prized his independence, and was proud of his poverty. He lived altogether by his pen, and has up to date faithfully adhered to his vocation. He contributed to newspapers and periodicals, and cultivated his genius for poetry. He was always at the disposal of the poor and the aggrieved, and spent no small portion of his time in writing memorials and appeals for the latter, with a tact and ability which seldom failed with the authorities. His reputation as an adviser and interpreter brought him into close acquaintance with some of the Native States, but he was often cheated by unprincipled officers in their service. Once he went to a State on the sea-coast during the monsoons, at the risk of his life. The Parsi Diwan had implored him to come, and promised him a large sum for a representation to Government; but this worthy did not scruple to

trick him by giving him an empty bag supposed to contain currency notes. Malabari was so trustful and so careless in money matters, that it was not until he reached home and opened the bag that he discovered the fraud. He wrote to the Diwan, and the Diwan made an apology and begged for time. Malabari replied by sending him back the promising letters and releasing him from all obligations. He has done this in several other cases. If his constituents had been honest he would have been to-day worth at least a *lakh* of rupees.

Malabari as a Journalist.

Early in 1876 a couple of enterprising schoolboys and a clerk in the Bombay Municipality started a cheap weekly under the name of the *Indian Spectator*. Malabari used now and then to assist them. Later on he was made co-editor with another friend, who went in for politics, while Malabari was all for social subjects. The political editor was a fellow student and a particular chum of Malabari's, described by him as "my superior in general knowledge, perhaps my equal in his

distaste for mathematics, pure or otherwise; but with a command of English, cool judgment, and powers of organization which I envied." In Mr. Ferozesha Pestanjï Taleyarkhan Malabari found a congenial spirit. Many a time has he spoken to me with a flush of pleasure how the two lads spent their time together "lotus-eating." They hunted up quaint old volumes of poetry, devoured their contents over a basket of delicious fruit and ice-cream, or discussed their merits over a hot dinner. "We lived in a sort of dreamland," adds Malabari, "by no means a fool's paradise. The only pity was we neglected the practical side of life."

While this strange literary partnership continued, Malabari fell in with a proposal of Mr. Martin Wood, who had then left the *Times of India*, to start a new paper devoted to the advocacy of the rights of Native States and of the masses at large. He had been introduced to this veteran publicist by Sir Cowasji Jehanghir, after the publication of the "Indian Muse." Mr. Wood took very kindly to him, and gave him his journalistic training. He became now Mr.

Wood's coadjutor, and at his own expense undertook, in March 1878, a journey to Gujarat and Kathiawar, in order to interest Native princes in the enterprise, and to secure their support. "Gujarat and the Gujaratis" was the result of this tour, besides about Rs. 2,000 in cash, and promises of some Rs. 15,000 more, which were never fulfilled. Mr. Wood started the *Bombay Review*, a small weekly of the size of the *Pall Mall*, in which many of the descriptions of places and people that are to be found in "Gujarat and the Gujaratis" were first published. The editor set a high value on Malabari's writings, and paid him at the rate of Rs. 20 to Rs. 25 a column. Malabari has had offers of the same rate of remuneration from other proprietors, but has seldom or never contributed for money. The *Bombay Review*, in spite of the great abilities and experience of its conductor, was financially a failure, and after a couple of years ceased to exist. The *Indian Spectator*, too, had had its struggles, and eventually the proprietors became so sick of it as to be glad to sell the plant as well as the goodwill to a Bori, who some time after sold the goodwill to Malabari

for Rs. 25! Thus, about the beginning of 1880, Malabari entered upon his journalistic career with plenty of brains, but a plentiful lack of the sinews of journalistic enterprise—money. In fact, he would not have undertaken the task but for the promise of pecuniary aid from a wealthy and enlightened Hindu gentleman. The two entered into a contract, the one to supply brains, the other money. The profits were to be shared in equal proportion. But here arose a difficulty. To make the story short, Malabari was startled by a proposal to send his sub-editor twice a week to the capitalist for instructions. On objecting to the proposal, our journalist was curtly told—"You see, two men have to ride one horse. One of us must ride behind." "Well," replied Malabari as laconically, "I am not going to be *that one;*" and without further parley he left the astonished sowcar.* Unfortunately, he had drawn one month's expenses in advance from the partner that was to be. But he sold a trinket and paid off the debt. "For the first few months," writes Malabari, "I struggled with the *Spectator*, only to show

* Banker.

that money was not everything. It was a cruel hardship, and there were moments when I almost felt the Walpolian theory to be correct. But I struggled on, writing, editing, correcting proofs, at times folding and posting copies, and even distributing them in town, going the round in a cab, with the driver to deliver the copies as instructed by me." Malabari had started on his tour with borrowed funds. He never had recourse to professional lenders, but though his creditors were his friends, the money had of course to be repaid. The *Indian Spectator* added to his embarrassments. It had hardly fifty *bonâ fide* subscribers. Only a couple of ornaments were left, and these were now sold to pay at least the interest due to the clamorous creditors and to support the paper. There were many to whom Malabari had given pecuniary help; some who had used him as their security for loans which he had to liquidate. None of them came to his aid, and it was at this time that Malabari realized fully why prudence was counted one of the cardinal virtues. His devoted wife and children (he had a daughter and a son now) shared his privations. But

there is a silver lining to every cloud, and although Malabari had found many for whom he had toiled and even borrowed, ungrateful, he came across one as unselfish as himself at this crisis of his life. This was the Parsi gentleman to whom the "Sarod Ittifak" is dedicated, and who acted like a brother. He helped the young journalist on hearing from a friend of the struggles he was undergoing. "Though he lent me the money, he showed as if he were borrowing it of me," writes Malabari. Some years later the money was thrust upon him by force; and he had to take it back, though with great reluctance and with even bitterness of feeling, as Malabari was unwilling to keep it when he no longer needed it.

Malabari, before he was relieved, was in a very pessimistic mood. He thought he was unfit for town life and had better be in the jungles. But he could not retire on nothing a year, and there was his family to be maintained. Moreover, there was a vast field of usefulness open to him in his new career. He had taken up the *Indian Spectator* to make it "the people of India's own paper."

He was "a people's man" himself, and understood the poor—the great majority of the nation — as very few have understood them. He could also do justice to the acts and motives of the rulers, being in touch with official opinion. He wanted to be a political, social, and even religious reformer. There were moments when he thought his songs and his poetry would be a better lever, a better organ for this purpose than a newspaper. But the *Indian Spectator* was alive, and, like Frankenstein, refused to die. The little paper that was a rag in 1879, after a creditable early career, rose into fame, and compelled its editor to remain in harness. To kill the work of one's own hands is very much like killing one's own children. That has been Malabari's feeling at least about the *Spectator;* otherwise, I am afraid, he would have preferred the obscurity of a village with his muse to the celebrity of a city life with its attendant evils.

The *Bombay Review*, shortly before its surcease, spoke very favourably of the new journalist.

"The editor," it wrote, "is peculiarly fitted for being a trustworthy interpreter between rulers and ruled, between the indigenous and immigrant branches of the great Aryan race. It is easy to see that he thoroughly understands the mental and moral characteristics of those two great divisions of the Indian community, not only as presented in Bombay, but in other provinces in India. We have always felt confidence in the sincerity and independence of its editor. His knowledge of the various castes and classes of Society in Western India is full and exact, while in aptitude for discussion of social questions he displays a discrimination and aptness in picturesque description and a genuine humour, sufficiently rare."

When it is noted that the *Indian Spectator* has often had to try conclusions with Indian and English contemporaries, the compliments paid to it by these journals may be better appreciated.

The *Indian Mirror* praised the "brilliant and pithy paragraphs" of the new paper, and the *Hindoo Patriot* "its refreshing and trenchant style," and "the force and independence" of its views. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* passed even a higher encomium:

"In wit, humour, and satire, and in the complete mastery of the English language, our contemporary stands pre-eminent. His smart and playful sayings, so

full of meaning, pass current in the country. Week after week the columns of our contemporary are filled with the treasures of a rich and versatile mind."

The *Indian Statesman* called it in 1882 "the best paper in India." The *Pioneer* called it "the ablest Native paper in the Bombay Presidency." The *Englishman* bore testimony to its "idiomatic English" and its "bold trenchant style." The *Indian Daily News* eulogized its remarkable ability and fairness.

"In politics," said this paper, "its tone is moderate, and it is thus a very safe guide to native readers, its criticisms having mostly a practical turn, and showing a ready acceptance of facts as they stand. Looking at its varied and often clever contents, the *Spectator* is a marvel of cheapness. It often gives a sketch of some typical class or caste, which, by reason of the special information it affords, as well as by its piquant style, is alone worth the small subscription to the paper for the whole year."

The London *Times* in 1882 wrote :—

"A considerable portion of the English press of India is written by natives; and many of these so-called Anglo-Native papers are written with great ability and in excellent idiomatic English. Such are the *Indian Spectator* of Bombay, the *Hindoo Patriot* and the *Indian Mirror* of Calcutta."

The *Academy* considered the *Indian Spectator* "no unworthy rival of its London namesake;" and *Allen's Indian Mail* spoke of it as

"A journal representing in the highest degree, not only the intelligence, but also the moderation and liberality of educated natives."

The *Révue Critique* of France in 1883 wrote as follows :—

"The *Indian Spectator* has rapidly assumed a foremost place in the Indian press, and is not wanting in interest for a European reader, although unluckily it *comments* on the events of the week more than it *shows* them. Its language is remarkable for its brilliant strokes, its vigour, and *pungency* of style, and is very *idiomatic*."

And the *L'Economiste Française* in 1885 wrote :—

"The Indian press, notwithstanding its infancy, counts in its ranks men remarkable as much for their abilities as writers as for their sagacity and courtesy. In support of what we say it will be sufficient to cite the editor-in-chief of the *Indian Spectator* of Bombay. By persevering efforts he has to-day become one of the most influential men of the true Indian Liberal party, which, while maintaining the general tendencies of the policy of Lord Ripon, is not slow to recognize that this latter sometimes erred through excess of liberalism in wishing to move too fast.

This political party, which does the greatest honour to the good sense of the Indian race, demands earnestly the gradual enfranchisement of their country."

The fame of the paper travelled even to America, for in 1883 the *New York Sun* said :—

"There is many an American newspaper written less correctly than the *Indian Spectator ;* and there is probably not a British scholar living who could use any of the Indian vernaculars with the ease and idiomatic precision displayed by Mr. Malabari in dealing with the English tongue."

The highest officials in India have recognized the merits of the journal. Lord Ripon admired it, and Sir E. Baring wrote :—

"I always read your paper with interest for two reasons —first, because it represents the interests of the poorer classes ; secondly, because it is opposed to class and race antagonism. The last point is especially important in this country."

The Hon. Sir Auckland Colvin, his successor, called it some time ago "the leading Native journal," and in a resolution of the Government of Bombay it has been styled "the foremost native paper in the Bombay

Presidency." General Sir LeGrand Jacob, Sir Erskine Perry, Sir George Birdwood, Colonel Robert D. Osborne, Sir Arthur (now Lord) Hobhouse, and others, also warmly praised the paper for its high character and its ability. But what perhaps Malabari prizes most of all is a letter from the late lamented George Aberigh-Mackay (Sir Ali Baba), in which he wrote :—

"I have read a number of your paragraphs and short sketches with the greatest interest and pleasure; they have point and humour, and are charmingly expressed. I heartily wish every success to the *Indian Spectator*."

Thus the *Indian Spectator* has grown to be one of the ablest public journals in the country, certainly the most influential Native journal. Its voice penetrates into the Councils of the Empire. The secret of its success lies mainly in its rigid impartiality between class and class, as also between the rulers and the ruled. It may be mentioned that in conducting the paper Malabari was valiantly supported by one of his intimate friends and advisers, Mr. Dinsha Edulji Wacha. Mr. Wacha contributed some of the most notable articles in

the *Spectator*, displaying an amount of political and economical study, and an aptitude for thinking, which are most creditable to him.* "But for Dinsha," wrote Malabari, "I would have been nowhere, and so also the *I. S.* He not only gave us most valuable literary assistance, but brought us more than once pecuniary help from friends as disinterested as himself. My own money affairs are even now managed entirely by Dinsha."

It is really surprising how, with his limited reading, and still more limited knowledge of the world, Malabari could carry on his paper so successfully. "My history is rather strong," he once wrote, "thanks partly to the love of it imbibed from Green. Geography as weak as mathematics, owing to want of talent and bad teaching. Of light literature I have had almost a surfeit—my love of novel and romance being next to the love of poetry. But I have hardly studied a single work of any of the solid thinkers of the age. In this respect you could set me down as a creature of arrested growth. The fact is, my life has

* He is really a prodigy of facts and figures, and is amazingly active and earnest.

been too crowded for regular self-culture—a misfortune of which I am reminded almost every day. Last year I laid bare my ignorance before a friend from Europe, as we sat exchanging confidences late at night. He grew indignant as I neared the end of my ignominious confession, and then jotted down the names of some thirteen 'epoch-making' books, threatening to send them all to me if I failed to read them up in time. He has carried out his threat as faithfully as I my promise. You will ask how I manage to get through my daily work. Well, I try to follow current events so far as I can. The office keeps me supplied with cuttings and markings. I am lucky in contributors and correspondents, and have friends all over the country on whom I can rely. I have half a dozen friends with me every evening, who keep me informed of what is going on, each in his own line—politics, science, art, law, literature, gossip. Before he became involved in matters municipal, Dinsha Wacha was my cyclopædia for ready reference." Above all these advantages, however, we must not forget the human sympathy with which Malabari is so richly

endowed. The success of his career as a journalist lies mainly in his love of truth and his great forbearance. When stung into a bitter retort, he keeps it over, revises and re-writes the paragraph before sending it to the printer. He will revise it again in proof. "And yet of a Saturday night I may be startled from sleep, go down, have the machine stopped, remove the ugly word or sentence that startled me, and then walk up with a conscience at peace." The same tenderness for the feelings of others marks his private life. "I am unfit for journalism," he has often complained to me.

Malabari as a Tourist.

The *Indian Spectator* did not absorb all the energy of its editor. He was very fond of leading a kind of Bohemian life at least for a month in the year, and had his tours. This is how he describes his peculiar system of travelling.

"I am now and then asked by European friends how often I have been to England, and how long I have stayed there altogether. And when I protest that I have never been

out of India, my friends look at me in blank astonishment. The fact is, I have my own ideas of travel, as more or less of everything else. The first tour I remember having made was round grandmother's kitchen. Thence I transferred my attention to the front yard of the house, thence to the street, the neighbouring street, the whole suburb of Nanpura, and the surrounding suburbs—Rustampura, Salabatpura, Gopipura, and many others; next the Camp and the villages beyond, Umra and Dumas, and so on. The climbing of trees and roofs in search of paper kites was another round of useful tours. (Kite-flying is one of the best Indian sports, and I am sorry to find it discouraged. I think it is an aid to the sight, and it undoubtedly steadies the hand and sharpens presence of mind.) Well, then, next to climbing of trees or roofs, swimming or fording the Tapti, and running over to Bhatha, Rander, Adajan, and other *gaums*,* was also a means of touring. My early local tours were often extended to Udna, famous for toddy, and some miles from Nanpura. My last long tour from Surat was

* Villages.

a walking match to Nowsari, when poor Mr. Rustomji Jamsetji gave his savoury and succulent *malida* * feast. From Surat and its districts I have passed on to Gujarat generally, and from Gujarat, of course, to Kathiawar and Kutch. I have seen much of India during the last seven years, but Gujarat and Kathiawar I know best. Much of these two provinces I have done on foot, and with my eyes open. I know so much about them, that if I were to sell my knowledge at retail price, so much for the page, I think I could make an honest penny out of it. And I tell you again, my dear respectable Bombay reader, that much of my experience is the result of good hard tramping. If you want a real guide, one who would make you profit by your travels, consult me. One peculiarity about my travelling is that I seldom return the same way I have gone. This is a somewhat inconvenient habit, but it has grown upon me, and I think, on the whole, I have gained by it. I hope one day to finish India from end to end; and then, who knows that I may not go to Europe,

* A confection made of flour, ghee, sugar, and spices.

America, and the rest of the world? Less likely things have happened.*

"But whether I go to Europe or not, I will never give up my habit. In study, as in travel, I wish to begin at the very beginning, and to proceed by slow stages, gaining something at every stage, and that something such as to be of immediate practical use on the next stage. This is the best way of travelling and studying. Your globe-trotter will laugh at my antiquated method, but he cannot deny its advantages. When you travel or study by degrees, every fresh step or item of knowledge is a keen enjoyment. You are prepared to receive it, and thus received, your knowlege will fructify. But when knowledge is thrust upon you without previous discipline, that is, without your being made fit for it, it will be inert and unleavened. What is the use of visiting foreign countries when you know nothing of your own? When you go to Europe, ignorant of your own national life, you will miss those thousand points of comparison and contrast, those thousand shades of difference, those thousand

* Malabari has since been twice to Europe.

beauties and blemishes, that modern European civilization presents. At the best, you will *look at* things, not *see* or *see through* them. Knowledge is best acquired, take my word for it, by the comparative method. And what will you compare your new acquirements with, when there are not half a dozen home ideas in that empty head of yours? You go to see Windsor Palace and are lost in admiration at the sight. Have you seen Agra? Had you seen some of the architectural glories of your own country, you might at any rate have controlled your faculty for admiration. You might have been quite at liberty to admire the modern structure, but at the same time you could have seen what beauty it has which the palaces of India do not possess, and *vice versâ*. The same is the case with study. If you learn Greek after learning Sanskrit, Persian or Arabic, you will enjoy the process, recognize the advantage of one over another, and though you may admire the European classic as much as you like, you will have no reason to be ashamed of your own. I honour you for your desire to examine the arts, sciences and philosophies of the West; but you cannot do this

with advantage to yourself and the world unless you have already made yourself familiar with the national systems. The worst result of this method of travel and study that I am complaining of is, that it gives a man poor ideas of everything in his country, in proportion to the exaggerated notions he imbibes about other countries. This is a charge from which very few of our England-returned men can escape. It makes me sick to hear a man rave about this thing or that 10,000 miles away, when a much better, perhaps the original thing, is lying unnoticed in his own land. Bah! I hate your Anglicised Aryan."*

It must be admitted that no Anglicised Aryan has yet produced a work like "Gujarat and the Gujaratis," or the charming sketches, so brimful of humour, which Malabari sent to his paper, when, with Max Müller's "Hibbert Lectures" on the brain, he went about collecting funds for translating them into the principal vernaculars of India. He travels with a small quantity of luggage, but always with a chest of homœopathic medicines. In 1878, while at Wadhwan, he was snatched

* *Indian Spectator*, July 1, 1888, p. 411.

from the jaws of death by a Hindu practitioner, Dr. Thakordas, who gave him his first lessons in homœopathy, and ever since Malabari has gone in strongly for it, and done his best to popularize it in Bombay. He was instrumental in starting the largest Homœopathic Charitable Dispensary in that city, and was its Honorary Secretary. The medicine chest is extremely useful to him in his travels. It has often served to give relief, not only to him, but to many a fellow traveller and to many a patient in the places visited by him. Malabari on tour is at his very best. A keen lover of nature, with observant eyes and a sympathetic heart, he finds true poetry in the homeliest scenes and every-day incidents. Many of his sketches are bright little idylls in prose, not unworthy even of Wordsworth. "Gujarat and the Gujaratis" has won great fame; but, to my mind, the free and easy "Round-about Papers," which are to be found in the *Indian Spectator* of 1882 and 1883, are far better. They abound with sparkling and incisive sayings, witty anecdotes, humorous comparisons and charming observations. One example of these last might be quoted. At

Rutlam, Malabari put up at the Musafir Bunglow, and he writes :—" Musafir Bunglow was a few yards from the Dharmsala. Khansama an old man. I have never known a young Khansama in these parts. The explanation is that when a Saheb cannot afford to pension his old butler, he provides a place for him in this manner. The Khansama had a large family of children and grand-children, all ready to serve ; but he kept a very spare table —only curry rice for breakfast, the town being so far. Had to make shift on milk. About 2 p.m., came Khansama's little grand-daughter, with broom and duster. She moved sofas and lifted chairs with an agility that would horrify Bombay girls of twice her age. 'What is your name, child ?' 'Pyari'—Darling. What a name! 'Whose darling are you, *betta ?*' * 'Ajisaheb † I am God's darling, my mother's darling, my father's darling, whose else ?' So, God before mother and father. Not bad for a girl who has never attended the Alexandra School. ‡ Whatever their failings, the Mahomedans are remarkable for their ready wit, and for those amiable accomplishments

* Child. † Oh Sir. ‡ At Bombay, for girls.

which Hindus and Parsis find it so difficult to acquire or exhibit. Pyari sang one or two little songs at my request, which were decidedly more intelligible than the pathetic buffalo-song I had at Indore." *

It is this familiarity with the poor, and his heartfelt sympathy with them, that endear him most to the reader.

Malabari as a Literary Man.

After suffering "twitches, aches, swellings, rawness, thirst and hunger" during a twenty-six hours' journey by Dák Tonga to Kolhapur, Malabari wrote:—"Motion is the poetry of life; so long as you are within an inch of suicide, you can enjoy motion. And much good may it do you!" I don't know whether it did him much good, but I have no doubt that he enjoyed writing poetry as much as living it and walking it. In 1878 he published his "Wilson Virah," in memoriam of Dr. Wilson, and dedicated it to the Rev. Mr. Taylor. Its contents may be described in the words of the *Bombay Gazette*: "It opens with a pathetic

* *Indian Spectator*, August 5, 1883, p. 491.

lament of Saraswati,* and its interest is throughout maintained with great power. Under the heading Satishiromani † is given a picture of the amiable and accomplished wife, Margaret Wilson. He then tenderly touches the period of Dr. Wilson's marriage, and recounts the united efforts of Dr. and Mrs. Wilson for the good of the people. Much of what follows is taken up by a spirited description of Dr. Wilson's services to Bombay—his visit to Scotland, his return, illness and death. Then follow a series of eulogistic verses devoted to the enumeration of Dr. Wilson's erudition and personal merits. Altogether," concludes the *Gazette*, "'Wilson Virah' is a remarkable work of its kind, and we hope that the setting forth of this great man's life in a captivating form, and in the author's own vernacular, may not be lost upon all who may read it."

"Wilson Virah" is mainly lyrical, and it moves its reader to feel keenly the sorrow of the poet at the loss of his friend and benefactor, and to appreciate fully the worth and virtue of the

* The Hindu goddess of learning.

† The best of virtuous wives.

great philanthropist and *savant*. "Dr. Wilson was the patron of thousands of the poor, the supporter of the unfortunate indigent, the advocate of the people, the adviser of the State,"* Malabari had enjoyed his friendship for three years, and could do justice to his exemplary life in all its manifold relations. The result was a work occupying a unique position in Gujarati literature, as it was the very first which gave an attractive picture of a true Christian with almost an unapproachable standard of duty, a marvellous amount of solid learning, a genuine modesty, and a rare sense of self-sacrifice. It was received by the press with a chorus of compliments, which was certainly not undeserved.†

Malabari's next attempt was in English

* *Rast Goftar.*

† "The language of 'Wilson Virah,'" wrote the *Jam-e-Jamshed*, "is simpler and more racy than of 'Niti Vinod,' and its original thoughts, descriptive power, and genuine poetic expression reflect credit on the author's genius." "His readers," wrote the *Gujarat Mitra*, "are not only loving Parsis, but admiring Hindus. And no wonder. For Mr. Malabari's language is not only pure—it is the purest of the pure." "His language is very pure and simple, his poetry is very sweet and readable," wrote the *Shamsher Bahadur*. "Mr. Malabari's poetry is so touching and impressive that we are tempted to read it over and over again. His works are the ornaments of our libraries."

verse. It was a series of sonnets, in memory of the late Princess Alice, in which he drew a noble picture of her womanly excellence with a "pathos and sympathy very warm and deep." He received the following appreciative acknowledgment of the sonnets from Her Majesty the Queen-Empress :—

"Her Majesty sincerely appreciates the very kind expression of sympathy conveyed in Mr. Malabari's letter, and thanks him for his condolence on the death of her dear daughter, the Princess Alice, Grand Duchess of Hesse.

"Osborne, 30th January, 1879."

"This," wrote the *Bombay Gazette*, "is a great compliment to a young Parsee author, and will prove a stimulus to him to assiduously cultivate the great talent which he undoubtedly possesses, and strive to achieve greater triumphs."

The Calcutta *Statesman* wrote in the same strain. "This is a great compliment to the poet's genius and character. From what has been written by Mr. Malabari, and from what has been written of him, we believe him to be a genuine poet; and his writings certainly

evince all the earnestness and enthusiasm of a poetical temperament. The youthful poet and journalist has our best wishes for his future success." The *Madras Athenæum*, the *Madras Mail*, and several other papers noticed the sonnets very favourably, and the Calcutta *Englishman*, in its issue of April 5, 1879, had these generous words about him:—

"He is, we understand, a constant contributor to English newspapers and periodicals; and his writings are characterized by great felicity of diction and vigour of expression. He takes keen interest in the moral and social progress of his countrymen; and his earnest and manly endeavours in that direction, as also in faithfully interpreting the relations of India to England, ought to be appreciated by both countries. Such men are all too few in this country."

In 1881, Malabari published his "Sarod-i Ittifak," and dedicated it to his "dear Jehangir," the friend who had helped him in sore need. It contains a number of beautiful songs. The *Gujarati*, a critical Hindu weekly, wrote rapturously of "the best harmony and the best poetical spirit" it displayed, and thus dilated on its merits.

"When it is seen that many of these verses were

written some fifteen years ago, it will be granted that Mr. Malabari was born with all the powers of a first-rate poet. The fire of Religion, the aspirations of Love, the strengthening of Virtue, the yearning after Friendship, and contempt of this false world, . . . these subjects have been treated in spontaneous language and in metres that could be rendered into music. . . . What heart will not overflow with enthusiasm and delight by a perusal of the dramatic romance, *Pakdaman* (Lady Chastity), and *Shah Narges* (Prince Narcissus)? . . . The lines on Fortune may adorn the musician's art and may breathe hope into those who are discontented with their lot. *Buoga Bilap* and *Prabhu Prarthna* will prove refreshing to two intoxicated souls—the love-intoxicated and the faith-intoxicated. . . . These noble lines will work powerfully upon the singer as well as the hearer. . . . In short, the highest forms of poetry abound in these verses, and they are sure to fascinate the student of Nature with their deep meditative spirit, like that of Wordsworth or Milton."

The *Deshi Mitra*, the *Gujarat Mitra*, the *Jami Jamshed*, the *Dnyan Vardhak*, and several others wrote almost as admiringly. The language of "Nití Vinod" and "Wilson Virah" was what is called Sanskrit Gujarati; that of the "Sarod" in many pieces was Persian Gujarati, and the little work contained some *ghazals* (odes) after the Persian model, and also some pieces in Hindi. The book

was financially a greater success than "Wilson Virah."

Max Müller's Hibbert Lectures in the Vernaculars of India.

In 1882 came out the first of a series of translations of Prof. Max Müller's celebrated Hibbert Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion as illustrated by the Religions of India. In 1880 Malabari had undertaken to bring out this series, after several Indian scholars who had been invited by Max Müller to translate the lectures into one or two only of the vernaculars had declined the honour. The purpose of the Lectures was thus explained by Max Müller in a letter to Malabari, dated Oxford, February 2, 1882.

"As I told you on a former occasion, my thoughts while writing these lectures were far more frequently with the people of India than with my audience in Westminster Abbey. I wanted to tell those few at least whom I might hope to reach in English what the true *historical* value of their ancient religion is, as looked upon, not from an exclusively European or Christian, but from an *historical* point of

view. I wished to warn them against two dangers, that of undervaluing or despising the ancient national religion, as is done so often by your half-Europeanised youths, and that of overvaluing it and interpreting it as it was never meant to be interpreted—of which you may see a painful instance in Dayananda Sarasvati's labours on the Veda. Accept the Veda as an ancient *historical* document, containing thoughts in accordance with the character of an ancient and simple-minded race of men, and you will be able to admire it and to retain some of it, particularly the teaching of the Upanishads, even in these modern days. But discover in it steam-engines and electricity and European philosophy and morality, and you deprive it of its true character, you destroy its real value, and you break the historical continuity that ought to bind the present to the past. Accept the past as a reality, study it and try to understand it, and you will then have less difficulty in finding the right way towards the future."

Why Malabari considered the translation of these Lectures a necessity was interestingly explained by him in the following maiden

speech, delivered at Jeypore on May 5, 1882, at a meeting presided over by Major Jacob. The speech is well worth reading, and I therefore make no apology for reproducing it :—

"I must thank you in the beginning, Major Jacob and gentlemen, for your interest in the passing visitor, or, it may be, in his project. That interest is implied by your kindly presence here this evening. It may be as well to tell you here that I am not going to give you a lecture or an address; all that I have agreed to do is to make a general statement before you of matters connected with my scheme of translations.

"Max Müller's theory of Language and Religion I may place before you in a line. Language, he thinks, has arisen out of four or five hundred roots or germs. These roots have been developing in number and in strength since the beginning, with the result that the human race possesses this day so many different and copious forms of speech. Religion, Max Müller thinks, may be gradual development or elaboration of Sense and Reason into Faith, that is, the power to comprehend the Infinite. Gentlemen, you will observe that there is nothing gross or revolting in this view, whatever may be our estimate of its value. This is called the theory of Evolution, or, what I would call by preference, the theory of Historical Development. You will forthwith see that my little scheme, too, which I have the honour of submitting to your consideration, is the result of a series of evolutions. It is now seven years since I published a book of Gujarati verse. It was well received, among others, by my venerated and all-worthy friend, the late Dr. Wilson. The main feature of the

book was that in it the author had attempted to infuse the spirit and tone of some of the most approved literary productions of the West. Here I am quoting the *Times of India*. Well then, gentlemen, you see that this infusion of something of the modern Western thought into Gujarati verse marked the beginning of my literary career. Some time after, I published a little volume of English verse. That book, though a very indifferent performance, proved a blessing in its way. Gentlemen, it brought me acquainted with some of the noblest Englishmen and Englishwomen. The Earl of Shaftesbury, Miss Nightingale, Tennyson, Gladstone, Max Müller, Le Grand Jacob, Erskine Perry, and many others wrote to me, approving, suggesting, correcting, and advising. It is no business of mine, gentlemen, to tell you how a local critic decried our ambitious versifier. Take that as granted. Many of the English worthies sent me their works in return; and it was then that I began to realize what doing public good was like. (Cheers.) Gentlemen, if there are any saints treading God's earth, we may fairly take that venerable nobleman, noble in birth and in life and conversation, Lord Shaftesbury, and such incomparable Englishwomen as Florence Nightingale and Mary Carpenter, to be such. (Hear, hear.) The other notables you know better than I do, except, perhaps, General Sir Le Grand Jacob, whose nephew and heir here has done me the honour of presiding on this occasion; and Sir Erskine Perry, whose death only last week all India deplores and will ever deplore. Their enthusiasm of humanity was something phenomenal: but India was their first and best love; it was the object of their constant, lifelong love. (Applause.) But I must not wander. Well, gentlemen, some of my English verses

were liked, because therein I had expressed myself as an *Indian* thinker. I was true to myself and my country. Pray observe, gentlemen, that in my Gujarati verse I had tried to introduce some element of Western thought —in my English verse I introduced more or less of purely Indian interest. In this fact you may trace the germ of my theory, my pet theory,—that the means thus silently suggested are among the best calculated for a true and lasting union between West and East. Max Müller seems to have grasped this idea, though in me it was lying crude and inert. He wrote to me very kindly, and sent me a copy of his 'Hibbert Lectures.' A perusal of his letters and his Lectures breathed life into that inert idea of mine, and made it a definite tangible entity. My latent purpose was roused, and I longed to realize it. The 'Hibbert Lectures' came as a godsend to me. You all know who and what Max Müller is. In our parts we call him a *Muni*, a *Rishi*, an inspired sage. Gentlemen, the *Rast Goftar* calls Max Müller a prophet. I dare say there is some amiable exaggeration in that; but you will grant, that the man's intellect is luminous; that his powers of investigation and expression are equally marvellous. Then, he possesses keen catholic sympathies. He has laboured all his life to bring about a union amongst nations. That union has long been aimed at. A marriage between East and West was arranged even before the days of the illustrious William Jones. Even the silver wedding is gone and past. In that work of union you trace the hand of a higher Power than of man. Modern Indian history teaches you that. But I may say that Max Müller and his contemporaries have contributed largely to bringing to the surface the practical results of that process of, let us hope, progres-

sive union. By his "Rig-Veda Sanhita" and other works, Max Müller has given new birth, so to say, to Sanskrit: he has resuscitated, I say he has helped to regenerate, the language and literature of our land. (Loud cheers.) He has his faults, too, I allow. You often wish that a man in his commanding position could be a little more decided, a little more assertive. But, worthy critics, let me tell you that the more a man knows, the more ignorant he will feel; knowledge does not breed confidence so much as ignorance does. And thus where you and I will blurt out what we feel to be the truth, this man will halt and hesitate and discriminate.

"For these reasons, and others, I felt that the 'Hibbert Lectures' were just the thing for me to begin with. In these splendid dissertations the author gives us back our own, modernized, if I may so call it, and spiritualized. We badly want 'character' in our modern vernaculars. Here you have as much character and originality as you may wish for. You will readily grant that, by reason of his special study, Max Müller is best fitted of all his contemporaries for a work of this nature. And let me tell you, gentlemen, that he is decidedly better qualified than the best of our Indian scholars, because he is unbiassed and disinterested. (Hear, hear.) His chief recommendation is his catholicity. Different systems of faith are so many paths leading to the same goal, namely, to the source of Truth. Well, gentlemen, I have proposed to myself to have these Lectures translated into Sanskrit, Gujarati, Marathi, Bengali, Hindi, and Tamil. The Gujarati is already done by my friend, Mr. Naoroji Mobedjina, and myself; the other translations are more or less advanced. The work is entrusted to the best available hands, and their labours are to be revised by

competent scholars before passing on to the printer. And I trust that, when published, these vernacular versions may do some good. If I succeed, it is my ambition to form a standing association for purposes of translation from and into Indian languages—a service peculiarly acceptable to the *unlearned*—the people. And now you will have seen, gentlemen, that, like Max Müller's theory, my little scheme, too, has grown up after a series of evolutions, and that all I have just told you has not been evolved out of the depths of my own inner consciousness. It may be that I am growing a monomaniac on this subject; but pray see, there is some method in the madness. Besides, the mania cannot be so very rabid after all, since I have some of the best European and native friends in sympathy with me, as also the press of the country. It is no less encouraging than significant to know that my respected friends, Messrs. Wood, Wordsworth, Ryan, Birdwood, Macnaghten, Candy, the Hon. Mr. Kemball, the Hon. Mr. Gibbs, the Hon. Major Baring, the Hon. Mr. Hunter, Babu Keshub Chunder Sen, Babu Rajendralala Mitra, and others have, from the beginning, evinced a common interest in my experiment. The Government of Bombay have generously strengthened my hands with a pecuniary grant, and I reasonably expect similar encouragement from the other Governments. I cannot, of course, be sure that the scheme will succeed. Up to now very little practical success has attended my itinerary save the Maharani Shurnomoye's munificent little gift of Rs. 1,000. But I have sown the seed, and in good time I hope to reap a harvest. I have spared no effort and no expense; will spare none. Others, too, have been working, especially my brothers of the *Hindoo Patriot*

and the *Indian Mirror*. And now, gentlemen, I appeal to you to work with and for me. Make my scheme your own, I beg. It is no more my scheme than yours, of the nation; yes, gentlemen, it has been described as a national project. Life is a precious blessing. What is impossible, with that blessing in us and around us? With you living, and I living, and the world living; with the English language moulding our thoughts, and the English rule moulding our destinies, why despair? Nay, let us hope for the best."

Major Jacob then said a few words to mark the sympathy of the meeting with Malabari's efforts, and the meeting broke up.

These proceedings took place while Malabari was on his way from Calcutta to Bombay. He had visited almost all the important centres of Bengal, and had received a great deal of praise. The leading newspapers in Bengal, Native as well as English, recognized his venture as a "national enterprise," and called upon the Government and patrons of literature generally to support it. The *Indian Mirror* and others went so far as to recommend the establishment of a permanent national fund to help Malabari in his undertakings. The project was viewed with equal

enthusiasm by Keshub Chunder Sen, Rajendralala Mitra, and other leaders of thought in India. But no substantial support was given to the scheme in Bengal, except by the Maharani Shurnomoye. The work was extremely expensive, for it was quite clear that these translations would not be *popular*. Malabari knew this well enough, but his object was not gain or popularity, but a gradual religious revival. "India wants nothing so much as a religious revival, or rather a restoration. There is no real unity for the nation except through one faith; political unity is always uncertain. The struggle lies in future between a new religion for the people and a revival of the old. And to a consummation of the latter, which will be through a natural process, I believe that the labours of Max Müller will contribute more than of any other living authority."*

This scheme of translations has cost Malabari no end of trouble and sacrifice. Not dispirited by his indifferent success in the North-West Provinces in 1881, and in Bengal in 1882, he started, in January, 1883, for

* *Indian Spectator.*

Central India, and, travelling very rapidly, was able to interest many princes and chiefs in his enterprise. He saw the "Merchant Prince of Indore," the father of the present Holkar, on the 7th of June, reached Dhar, the old capital of Raja Bhuja, and Mandu, that "eloquent sermon in stone on human vanity," on the 11th, passed on to "Mhow and Misanthropy" and the fat bugs of Mhow "as healthy and full of blood as Bhattia millionaires," on the 13th, missed the train for Rutlam, and went to Ujein, the capital of Vikram, and thence travelled to Rutlam, where he met the little Pyari and Raja Ranjitsing (the pupil of Aberigh-Mackay), with whom he had a most interesting conference. This tour was not so disappointing as the Bengal one; but it was not a success. Malabari said as much to an English friend on his return to Bombay, and this friend advised him to try the Southern Mahratta Country. No sooner said than done. On July 3, he left for Poona, and thence starting post-haste for Kolhapur on July 5, reached his destination after a most fatiguing journey of twenty-six hours. He saw Colonel Reeves

and the Regent, and passed half a week at Kolhapur, and thence discoursed on "that licensed assassin," that "poisoner-general of the population"—the liquor seller—on pottery and poetry, on the Gujri fair, on High Court Judges, military politicals, and secret despatches. On July 9, he left for Sangli, got a handsome little donation from the Chief, and wrote about the water-famine on the G. I. P. Railway, "the insolence of office," "the autocratic obstructiveness of some Collectors, and the "naikins (dancing girls) reciting the mantras of the 5th Veda." On July 10, he left for Miraj, and thence on the next day he proceeded to Bombay, after a short but not unsuccessful expedition.

In August, 1883, he published the Mahrathi translation, and in the cold season again set out to plead the cause of "Bhat Max Müller. This time he wanted to attack the Scindhia; and so passing a couple of days at Agra (this was his third trip to the famous city), he started for Morar, where, unfortunately, he was laid up with fever. Nevertheless, on November 11, he had an interview with the Gwalior prince —a fruitless one—for H. H. Jioji Rao Scindhia

knew nothing of literary charity or of Max Müller, and quietly

"Smole a smile
A quarter of a mile"

at his young visitor's enthusiasm. The enthusiast returned to Bombay, nothing discouraged, and pushed on with the translations. The Bengali version has come out already, as also the Hindi. The Tamil is in the press. The Sanskrit is the most difficult one; attempts have been made, costing much labour and money, without satisfying Max Müller. But this Sanskrit translation will not be long delayed. Malabari himself translated about one half of the Lectures in Gujarati—the other part was done by Mr. Naoroji Mancherji Mobedjina, Manager of the *Indian Spectator*—and prefixed to this translation a lucid essay of his own on Religion. The rest of the translations are the work of Hindu scholars employed by him.

"GUJARAT AND THE GUJARATIS."

The only other literary performance of Malabari, excepting fugitive poems like the elegy

on the death of Lady Fergusson, the sonnets in memory of Aberigh-Mackay, the "Lines addressed to a Photograph," the poem on the retirement of our noble ex-Viceroy, Lord Ripon, that on the unholy gains of commissariat contractors, and so on, is his "Gujarat and the Gujaratis." This had the honour of being published in London by the well-known firm of Messrs. Allen and Co. at their own risk and cost. It has already gone through a second edition and a third, which would have been out three years ago but for the author's absorption in the social reform crusade. The merits of the book have been acknowledged by almost all the leading journals in India, by many in England, and by some even in France and the United States. One of the best reviews appeared in the *Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore, which, though it perceived in a few places the faults of "over-smartness" and "vivacity occasionally lapsing into vulgarity," heartily praised "the genuine humour" of the writer, "the sincerity which seems inseparable from the gift of humour," his "unforced vivacity and frankness of style," his "unmistakable strain of

the comic faculty and sound moral intentions." "The result," it summed up, "though English enough in form, has a fundamental independence, a national idiosyncrasy, which is its best feature, and is as characteristic and piquant as though it had been written in the flexible Gujarati in which Parsis delight. The fiction, then, that a native of India loses his national characteristics by English education is not true. Nor is it true that his moral sense is blunted. Nor is his affection for the poetry and learning of the East in any way lessened, but rather it is intensified. It would be mockery to ask whether the M. O. L's., B. O. L's., and D. O. L's. of our new University are likely to produce anything in Sanskrit shloka or Persian ode with half the vitality and direct bearing on the difficulties that beset national development, as this little book possesses." The London press wrote strongly in favour of the book. The *Saturday Review* alone was of a different opinion.*

* The following passage from a review well describes the varied contents of the book :—

"The writer is truly a humorist in the best sense of the word. He 'professes' to quote Thackeray, 'to awaken and direct your love, your pity, your kindness, your scorn for un-

The third edition of "Gujarat," published in 1889, elicited some very interesting opinions.

truth, pretension, and imposture—your tenderness for the weak, the poor, the oppressed, the unhappy. To the best of his means and ability, he comments on all the ordinary actions and passions of life almost. He takes upon himself to be the week-day preacher, so to speak. Accordingly, as he finds, and speaks, and feels the truth best, we regard him, esteem him—sometimes love him. No one who reads 'Gujarat and the Gujaratis' will fail to have a very high admiration and esteem for its author. It awakens and directs our love for men like Karsandas Mulji and Rustomji Jemsetji, the Rev. Robert Montgomery, Mr. Taylor, and Mr. Birdwood. It rouses our pity for the slaves and victims of caste, the blooming brides married to baby husbands, the youthful widows cut off at an early age from matrimonial bliss and consigned to the tender mercies of a heartless soulless society. We learn to think kindly of the 'primitive peace-loving Surtis' and of prodigal Mahomedan nobles of the type of Mir Bakhtawar Khan. . . . The untruth, pretension, and imposture of the Vaishnava Maharaj, the Parsi Dastur, the Mahomedan Mulla, are here most trenchantly and effectively exposed—and we are made to feel intense tenderness for those misguided creatures, who, bred in perverted faiths, expect salvation from sensual or superstitious cults. The book is full of pictures from life, whose 'photographic fidelity' we cannot praise too much. The prudish milkmaid of Broach who angrily refers her customer to her 'this' (husband), when asked what she would take for a seer of her beverage—the bullock-driver who 'kisses, embraces, lashes and imprecates' his animal by turns. . . . The snobs with their 'reserved-seat' etiquette, their 'purse-pride' and 'power-pride'—the naikin with her inseparable appendage who serves as her bear-leader, music-master, and go-between—the wrestlers making their make-believe bows and rubbing, scrubbing, currycombing, and kneading each other—the ultra-patriotic native politician with his maxim, 'Let a hundred people die under Native misrule rather than ten of them be saved by British interference'—the bloated

Sir W. Hunter wrote :—

"Formerly, the complaint was that Indian modern writers merely reproduced the abstract conceptions of

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Banya Railway passenger giving vent to imbecile cries on finding the train was about to move from the station at which he had to alight—the 'loyal' sneak who curries favour with the Collector in order to terrorise over the people, and is rewarded with a Khan Bahadurship—the Parsi Sheth, prim, old, well shaved, well washed, well scented, sitting down with a grimace, standing up with a yawn, walking as if he were a basket of newly-laid eggs, and sleeping with a stout cotton pillow tied under his chest—the Hindu *paterfamilias* inviting his young hopefuls, after swallowing plenty of substantials, to pommel and promenade on his capacious stomach—the orthodox Parsi crying out 'Defeat, defeat to Shaitan,' after giving a flap to his 'triple cord' at daybreak, 'mumbling over an extent of jawbreaking jargon' near the seashore, and having even while at prayer an eye to business and the main chance—the Parsi graduate flattening his nose against the Agiari altar, on the sly—the Parsi reformer who in public is honey-sweet to his family, but does not mind pulling his daughter by the hair if his shoes have not the requisite shine after blacking—the Parsi fashionable wife who insists on having a wet-nurse, a dry-nurse, a cook, and a hamal, though her husband earns only one hundred rupees a month—the guests at a Borah marriage ogling the bride according to the Borah custom with extreme unction—the Marwari with his policy of the 'long rope' and *centum per centum*, lending and lending till his victims are completely in his meshes —the village Hajam, barber, torch-bearer, herbalist, and procurer, all rolled into one, retailing scandal while plying his razor or his tweezers—the mofussil Vakil, that 'column of vapour issuing from the ocean of emptiness,' with his *brass* and his bluster, and his combative and obstructive tactics—the terrible Aghori besmeared with ordure, with eyes on fire, the nostrils wide-dis-

older authors. Your work in life has been an answer to imputations of this sort. As a social reformer you have seen clearly the great blot on the domestic life of India, and you have devoted all your energies and resources to removing that blot. As an author you have looked out on men and manners with your own eyes, and you have given us the result of your own observations in vigorous language, with a strong individual flavour. I sincerely trust, my dear friend, that years and health may be spared to you, to go on with both your great tasks—as a reformer of the family life of India, and as a writer of originality and power on the vital Indian questions of our day."

Sir James Lyall, Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, said:—

"I have looked into 'Gujarat' already, and have been interested in all I have read. . . . I hope you will find time some day to write companion volumes on other parts of India."

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tended, the tongue protruding, the hair full of vermin, and the nails an inch long—the Vaid with his Mantras and Tantras, his charms and his amulets, and his doses 'pottle deep'—the mannish 'mother-in-law,' a plague to her *dear* daughter and her dear daughter's lord, stern, meddling, and mischief-making—and last but not least, the Hinduani 'saturated with sweet silly domestic legends,' singing the garba with her companions, round 'a bonny youth and maiden fair'—all these are graphic portraits with the unmistakable lineaments of truth, and tell us much more of native life than your bulky gazetteers and heavy books of travel."

The late Archbishop Porter of Bombay said:—

"The book is an old friend of mine. In an earlier edition it had amused me and instructed me. . . . What a pity you have not had the leisure to write about some of the other provinces!"

General Sir Frederick Roberts, Commander-in-Chief in India, wrote:—

"'Gujarat' is most interesting, and I hope that some day you will have leisure to publish similar books on other parts of India with which you are acquainted."

MALABARI'S CREED.

"The study of Hindu poetry," writes Malabari, "tempered my fanaticism—the tendency of a nature that would protest against everything it could not understand or fall in with, and which sought to dissipate the fog of indifferentism around him by volcanic action. It taught me charity and forbearance. What makes me so tolerant to-day to my erring brother? Even to the votary of infant marriage I say—'Creature of God, go thy way. Live out thy error, if thou canst not see it now. The truth that thou shalt grasp in time

shall be none the less bright for the darkness of thy present ways.' Hindu poetry and Hindu associations have taught me this, above all, namely, that there is room for difference of opinion on almost every phase of the complex and inscrutable problem we call life.

"Now and again I break away from this beneficent restraint. The spirit of protest is up at sight of an obvious wrong or injustice. With me poetry is no pastime for an idle hour. It is the language of heroes and demi-gods. It is sacred. Every good thought is to me a precious gift, to be cherished with all the strength of my being. Every good word is a crystallized form of good thought, the more to be cherished because more enduring and efficacious. Every good deed is the crystallized perfection of the original heritage, the good thought inspired by God; and therefore the most perfect manifestation of the Divine in the human. This is my religion, so far as I can explain it now. I have made it my ideal. I believe it is the saving of wild natures like mine. Work, work, incessant work. Let there be no rest; because leisure often feeds the self, and so feeding, destroys

it; because, when idle, I am assailed by selfish and by evil thoughts. Do what I like, I cannot always shake these off; when the mind remains long unoccupied, it will stagnate, may perhaps be unhinged.

"My favourite prayers, as you know, are *Ashema* and *Ahunovairyo*. I cannot give you the exact meaning of the two verses; they are very hard of literal rendering, especially the second. It were too much to depend entirely on any of the translations extant. As to the first, intuition and the science of philology both seem to tell us that *Ashema* must mean something like Truth, Righteousness, the supreme aim of our life, the very reason of our being, its aptest symbol and completest vindication. In the practical concerns of life the Zoroastrian is bound to expand this sense of *Ashema* into true (that is, real, or good, or straight) thoughts, true words, and true deeds. I look upon *Asha* as the pride and glory of our common Aryan speech. May not my *Asha* be the same as your *Isha*, and the *Esse* of the white Aryas of Europe? Truth, realness, or, as I would call it, be-ness, is as much the pivot of our religion as charity is that of yours

(Hindu), love that of the Christian, faith that of the Mahomedan.

"The sense of *Ahunovairyo*, believed to be the oldest commandment delivered by Ahura-Mazd himself to his first prophet, is all but inscrutable. Some consider it to be the Word of the Bible. Judging from its intonation, and its extreme antiquity, about which there can be no doubt, I feel that it portrays, in the first articulate speech vouchsafed to man, the fierce struggle that lies before him as a responsible being—the struggle between good and evil,* incessant and all but co-eternal with conscious life. The lines of *Ahunovairyo*, more than Miltonic in their rugged grandeur, seem to me to proclaim an enthusiasm of resistance and protest as unique as it is terribly realistic. This is my explanation of 'Primitive Zoroastrianism.'

* Regarding the duration of this conflict between good and evil, Malabari had a very interesting discussion in 1887 with Mr. Samuel Laing, author of "A Modern Zoroastrian" and other popular expositions aiming to reconcile science with religion. The question was referred to Mr. Gladstone, who wrote to Malabari, sympathizing with his view, namely, that the good principle must ultimately triumph over the evil. Mr. Gladstone's letter was published, I believe, in the *Indian Spectator*.

"During my stay in Europe last year I sought frequent opportunities of inquiry and conversation regarding this dread problem of life. I went out of my way to witness the Passion Play at Oberammergau. Am I satisfied? Yes, I am. No, I am not. The fact is —I cannot tell, except that there is a vacuum yet to be filled. God alone knows if there is to be anything like a fulness of peace for a restless, hungry soul like mine, save in a scheme of life from which death and its causes shall have been eliminated. Where is this spiritual elixir to be had within the narrow bounds of our earthly existence? All that we can do is to work our way onward under the shadow of *Asha*, even as this good ship is working her way to the end of her voyage with the shadow of the skies overhead. The sea shall end somewhere, and his waters shall disappear from view as we proceed beyond. But the heavens above shall endure always and everywhere, with nothing beyond save *Asha*, the essence of life eternal.*

"In my relations with the world I make no

* This letter was written on board the *Imperator* from the Red Sea.

distinction of sex, religion, or nationality; sympathizing equally with all, most with them that most need my sympathy. I hold that ultimately and in the aggregate every man is the equal of every other man, every woman the equal of every other woman; that all men and women are the equals of one another, the apparent inequalities of life being matters of accident, whilst the equality at the root forms part of an intelligent design. Here and there one catches a glimpse of this teaching in modern Zoroastrian literature; but the original, as preached by the first protestant against priestly as well as kingly arrogance, seems to have been lost not long after Zoroaster's death.

"Purity of thought, of word, and of act, is the cardinal doctrine of our religion, with charity as the rule of life, and self-restraint as the supreme duty of individuals. This ideal of purity I must constantly observe, not only in the moral, but also in the physical world. Religion makes me a rigid sanitarian—I must avoid all contact with the dead and the decaying, with everything that is injurious to my health. It is a sin for the Zoroastrian to lose

his health, in however small a degree, or for whatever object. *Tandorasti hazár nayámat* (Health of body is a thousandfold blessing). Disease is the work of Satan. I must see to it he does not exert his evil influence on me. With purity of mind and body as my armour, I can always withstand his assaults. As a moral agent I must protect myself at every step from the power of guilt. *Guneh shikast sadhazarbár* (May guilt or sin be broken a hundred thousand times). This protest against the tyranny of sin which so encircles our existence may be said to form the basis of the Zoroastrian creed.

"As it is my duty always to cherish what is good and pure and health-giving, so it is my duty also to wage an incessant war upon all that is evil, impure, and noxious to health, in the moral or the physical world.

"Light is the most perfect of the visible emblems of purity, of incorruptibility; the giver, sustainer, and nourisher of life. My soul delights in doing homage to Light. Darkness is the most obtrusive type of impurity, of corruptibility; the cause of disease and death. I abhor Darkness with all the

strength of body, mind, and heart. Light is my good genius, Darkness my evil genius.

"The recognition of this dual principle of Light and Darkness, of Purity and Impurity, of Good and Evil—of Ahura-Mazd and Ahriman, to put it technically—is often stigmatized as dualism in worship. It is not so really. The conflict between Ahura-Mazd and Ahriman—that is, between the bright and the dark sides of man's nature—is doubtless incessant, and may perhaps end with his life. But for the soldier of Light the issue is by no means uncertain. Ahura-Mazd will help him, so long as he fights under his banner, with pure thought, pure word, and pure deed. But Ahura-Mazd is no more the final arbiter than he is the original cause. There is a yet higher than Ahura-Mazd, thinks the primitive Zoroastrian."

Malabari as a Politician and Publicist.

We have now only to glance at Malabari's politics, and then pass on to his latest labour —his campaign against social abuses. Of a retiring disposition by nature, we do not find his name among the political orators of Bom-

bay, and it is noticeable that he has seldom made a political speech. He can speak well enough when in the mood. For instance, his speeches in Northern India have been acknowledged, even by opponents, as so many gems in their way. But if he can, he will avoid addressing a public meeting. It is very seldom that he attends one. There are so many capable workers in that line of activity, that he thinks he will be excused for confining himself to the field in which workers are few and far between.

But though not a noisy politician, Malabari has had no small share in moulding the political history of the last ten years. He was the right hand of Dadabhai Naoroji, and by his moderation, as editor of the leading Native paper, and by his influence with the Native press, did yeoman's service in times of trouble. It is worth mentioning that though Dadabhai and Malabari differ widely in age, in tastes and pursuits, they live as friends on absolutely intimate terms. There is hardly any secret between them. The two families sometimes live as one. Malabari's acquaintance with Dadabhai is not more than ten years old—but the two

friends trust each other entirely. Dadabhai cordially supports Malabari's views on Social Reform, and Malabari as heartily supports Dadabhai's political views in general. Even when they differ, on personal or public grounds, the friends show each other an amount of forbearance worthy of the highest praise. They differ only as friends, each going his own way in perfect good faith. Malabari admires Dadabhai's prodigious knowledge, and Dadabhai delights in what he calls Malabari's "mind," or heart. "There is mind in all that you write," he once remarked. Dadabhai's earnestness is not less contagious than Malabari's. When the *Voice of India* was started in January, 1883, at the instance of that true friend of the country, Sir William Wedderburn, Malabari became its editor, while Dadabhai Naoroji found for it the sinews of war. The scheme of sending periodical telegrams to newspapers in England, to counteract the effect of those sent by Anglo-Indian politicians, owes it success, in no small measure, to Malabari's exertions. Malabari was one of those who kept their heads cool during the agitation which followed the introduction of

the Criminal Procedure Code Amendment Bill and the Bengal Tenancy Bill. He was in correspondence with the highest in the land, and in touch with the best thought of the country. His services, as a thoroughly honest and judicious interpreter between the rulers and the ruled, cannot be too highly spoken of. How well his labours, as a politician and a public journalist, are appreciated, may be seen from this testimony given by an English friend of India, who has done more than any other Englishman in shaping the character of what is called the National Party:—"But for him Bombay during the late great crisis (the agitation on the Criminal Jurisdiction Bill) would have had positively no voice outside her own narrow limits, and her distinguished citizens, left to the tender mercy of hostile or at best, in *our* cause, lukewarm European journalists, would have found her position widely different this day from what it is. . . . Many brave men, we are told, lived before Agamemnon, but unsung by any Homer, have sunk into oblivion. Mr. Malabari has not only been in this Presidency the voice of the National Party—a voice which has ever been a credit

and an honour to the province—but has been the Homer, to whose vaticinations, quite as much as to their own high intrinsic merits, our political leaders owe the wide-spread and distinguished reputation they bear." The same Englishman, writing later on, to a friend, says: "Lord Ripon, who had the highest possible opinion of Mr. Malabari personally, considered the *Spectator* the best of the Indian papers, devoted to the National Cause. And at home I was pleased to find, that amongst the comparatively small section of intelligent politicians who are interested in India and will stand by us, the *Spectator* was the one Native Indian paper read and respected."

Great as are Malabari's literary merits, his scrupulous regard for truth is even a greater merit, for a public man. In his editorial capacity he acts more like a judge than an advocate, and that is why he is trusted equally by the Government as he is respected by the thinking public. During the heat of the Ilbert Bill controversy, for instance, Malabari, who had supported the principle of the measure throughout, was the means of preventing a very hostile Native demonstration against it as

finally compromised. Distrusting the version of the compromise as telegraphed to Bombay by partisans, he telegraphed to Simla for correct information, and was requested to "suspend judgment" for a time. That message was passed on to responsible politicians in town, who were thus saved from the suicidal tactics of their countrymen elsewhere. Authentic information came in time from the seat of Government, and Malabari submitted the proposals to some of the soundest jurists and administrators of law in the country, only to find his own opinion confirmed. Well may he boast that within the limits of his acquaintance with successive heads of Government in India, he has used no less restraining influence on the Liberal than stimulating influence on the Conservative.

It goes without saying that a publicist occupying such a unique position enjoys opportunities of usefulness all his own; and it is equally unnecessary to add that Malabari always uses his opportunities for the public weal.

Although Malabari's name is as good as that of any of his contemporaries to conjure with,

he is personally little known even to the Bombay public. The reasons are not far to seek. In the first place, he is as shy as a schoolgirl before strangers. He has no taste for the small talk of Society, and is generally pre-occupied. Want of time is Malabari's usual complaint, and those who know the life of untiring beneficence he is leading will readily understand it. Besides, he is far from being a methodical worker, and you often find on his table "copy" and "proofs" for the press, lying cheek by jowl with poems and petitions, and pamphlets and papers and currency notes, mixed up in admirable confusion with flowers and photographs and a score of other sundries.

Another reason why Malabari is so seldom seen in public is his failing strength. For years he has been more or less out of health, suffering from loss of appetite and of sleep. And in this state, with his nerves often on the rack, he has had to meet an increasing strain of work. No wonder that this genial and ever-obliging man is so little in evidence in Society.

Nevertheless, few visitors of note from Europe or America pass through Bombay without an introduction for him. It was at his house that

Lord Randolph Churchill, afterwards Secretary of State for India, met a number of our leading politicians, in order to hear their views on the pressing problems of the day. The Earl of Rosebery did the same during his tour in India, and expressed himself as very highly pleased with the interview. Every year Malabari has to introduce English ladies and gentlemen on tour, interested in our educational, political, or philanthropic movements, to Native and European friends all over the country. During his Governorship of Bombay, Lord Reay appreciated Malabari's worth, and desired to give him the rich sinecure of the Shrievalty of Bombay in the Jubilee year. It was known that in that year the shrievalty would also carry a knighthood with it. But Malabari rose superior to the temptation. The newspapers wrote in high terms of his independence, the loudest in praise being those who were most opposed to his social reform movement. To them such an act of self-effacement was scarcely comprehensible; and speculation was rife for some time as to the causes that led to it. Suffice it to say, in Malabari's own words, that he considered himself fortunate in having

made room for another Parsi citizen, "a hundred times more deserving of such honours, because of his public munificence." Those who know the esteem in which he is held in and out of British India know also that this is not the first opportunity Malabari has passed quietly by.

The politics of Malabari are, what may be called, the politics of the poor—not the politics of the rich. He thinks the classes in India have had their day, and are well able now to take care of themselves; that it is high time Government thought more of the masses—the voiceless millions who have so few to speak for them. Malabari is no pessimist. He considers the Civil Service of India to be, on the whole, perhaps the ablest and the most honourable in the world. As such he does not think the Service to be too highly paid, except, perhaps, in the highest grade. Further, he gives credit for good intentions to the majority of our officials, ascribing errors more to ignorance than to wilfulness. But to prevent such errors ending seriously—if for no higher consideration—he recommends the employment of a larger Native agency, after open com-

petition, and a wider scope for the selection of non-official advisers of Government, as much as possible on the elective principle, for which he believes our municipalities, universities, chambers of commerce, and other public associations are fairly ripe. He holds that India ought to be rich enough, not only to pay her own way, but even to find profitable employment for thousands upon thousands in England, if the financial and economic relations between the two countries are placed on a healthy footing. At present these relations are more or less unnatural. This is his chief complaint. In this regard Malabari asks for justice to India, and nothing more. Nothing less, he fears, will meet the requirements of the case, either for England or for India.

He was one of the very few who supported Sir Auckland Colvin's Income Tax Bill rather than see the Salt Tax raised. He approaches every political question mainly from the point of view of the masses, the great agricultural population and the labouring class, being fully convinced that in their welfare lies the stability of the British rule. Read his "Ranji *bin* Byroo of Mahableshwar, Bhisti and Guide,

Naturalist, Malcontent, and Political Economist," and you have not an unfair idea of the opinions Malabari holds regarding the beneficence as well as the defects of English administration. "As for an united India," he writes, "a national India, an India kept in peace and order, it is not among the possibilities of the near future." English sovereignty is indispensable to the progress of India; but this original publicist would have men like Lord Ripon and Sir E. Baring come out to India as Assistant Collectors and not as Viceroys and Members of Council. He thinks we have had enough of good legislation, and that what is now necessary is good administration of the laws. He is not blind to the faults of educated natives, and has had a great deal to say on the educational policy of the Government. He believes that there is too much of *head education*, and too little of *heart education*. Referring to Poona, he wrote in July, 1883:—

"Its educational activity is as great as of Bengal, and, I think, more real. Bombay is nowhere. And yet, what has Poona done for its people? It may be a craze with me that the intellectual elevation of some of our best

men has removed them from the sphere of general usefulness. But if this be so, what is the use of a hundred highly developed intellects, where millions upon millions of their fellow-beings live only a degree removed from monkeys? I will not go the length of saying that education breeds selfishness; but in this country, especially in Bombay, it does seem to me to tend to exclusiveness. We are raising an intellectual aristocracy which owns to no concern in the fortunes of the vulgar herd. Under the British Government this class must necessarily grow in wealth and influence. Will it ever give us a Shaftesbury or a Stansfeld, a Howard or a Penn, a Nightingale or a Fry? And unless college education quickens sympathy with the mass, is it worth imparting at a high pressure? I know that almost all the friends whose opinions I value are in favour of education to begin at the top and to filtrate. The theory is sound and consistent with the law of nature. But though here I am in an inglorious minority, I cannot help saying that the peculiar conditions of life in India require consideration. Mr. Ranade, for instance, is

perhaps the ablest Native judicial officer in India; few know as I do what marvellous sagacity and acumen that man possesses. His judgments would be no way unworthy of a Westropp or a Sausse. Mr. Bhandarkar shines equally well in his line; he may not yield even to Max Müller in his special branch. These are "the forlorn hopes" of the people. Could they do no more for the people than at present? Poor Ganesh Joshi was just showing the way when his invaluable life ran short of a sudden. India wants more people's men. The country cannot rise unless its millions are lifted to a higher moral atmosphere and social responsibility. And this will not happen till we have a system of heart-education side by side with head-education. Can colleges give heart-education?"

I believe they can, but the best heart-education can only be imparted in the family and at home. This is the opinion of the best Indian thinkers, and holding this opinion Malabari commenced his crusade against social evils.

Malabari as a Social Reformer.

"It was the widow," wrote Malabari in 1885, "who first set me thinking about the whole question. And though I find that her cause is very difficult to win, and that the cause of the girl-bride, on which her own fate largely depends, is comparatively easy of success, still I really cannot give up *my widow*. And I am sure every Irishman, at least, will sympathize with me." We have seen with what deep feeling Malabari portrayed the sorrows of Hindu widows in his "Niti Vinod." He knew that there were many exemplary widows, and personally he was in favour of strict monogamy for both the sexes. But then, was it just to enforce widowhood on a girl who became a widow before she had known what it was to be a wife? And was it just to shave her head, to make her a scarecrow among her playmates and companions, and to rule her life, as it were, with the iron rod of custom and superstition? Was it just, again, for the male to marry as many wives as he liked, and for the female to be prohibited from marrying again after her

first husband's death, even though she might be a child in her teens? A great Hindu Pandit — Vidiasagar — had challenged his brother Pandits to prove that enforced widowhood was at all sanctioned by the Shastras. He had fought out his battle almost single-handed, and succeeded in moving the Legislature to pass an Act enabling those who conscientiously believed that widows could re-marry, to translate their belief into action. That declaratory Act had done very little good, for caste had proved too much for re-married widows and their husbands. It had, on the other hand, emphasized the curious anomaly that though unchaste widows could not be deprived of their husbands' inheritance, re-married widows could be. The position of Hindu widows was most unsatisfactory, legally and socially. There was not the least doubt that most of them were unhappy. Their misery was not sung by Malabari alone in pathetic verse. I have said before that the Hindu widow is almost a stock topic in vernacular literature. The Native papers often came out with very sad tales of their sorrows, and in 1883 an ortho-

dox journal like the *Gujarati* actually proposed that all Hindu widows should be called upon by Government to show cause why they had remained unmarried! Malabari was a constant reader of Native papers, and often noticed the cases brought to light by them. Let me quote a couple of these from the *Indian Spectator* of 1883.

"THE HINDU WIDOW AND HER WOES.

"The *Gujarati* reports a case of infanticide at Jetpur in Kattywar. A 'high-caste' widow, long suspected by the police and closely watched, gives birth to a child. The new-comer's mouth is immediately stuffed with hot kitchen ashes. Thus 'religiously disposed of,' and thrust into a basket of rubbish, its loving grandmother deposits the child into the nearest river. The village police THEN come to know about it."

"A very similar case is reported to us from Viramgaum; high-caste widow, new-born baby and hot ashes, though no mention is made of the loving grandmother or the basket of rubbish. Three persons are implicated in the former case. It must be remembered that the mother is very seldom a party to the 'act of merit.' After all it is her child, flesh of her flesh. Woman's love shines best under trials. The wife of a thief or murderer will cling to him all the closer the more he is shunned by the world; the mother of a bastard will love him more intensely, perhaps, to make up for the father's neglect. In the Jetpur widow's case, we may say she is no more a mur-

derer than is the head of the local police. The father of her unclaimed child, whom your humane English law never thinks of calling to account, is the prime mover, with the widow's parents and caste-people as his accomplices. So cleverly is the affair managed that hardly one case out of twenty can be detected. In most cases the child dies before birth. The patient is removed far from her own home, on a visit to a friend's or on a pilgrimage, and there she is absolved of the burden of sin. She is lucky if she escapes with permanent injury to the system, for the village surgeon is but a clumsy operator. If less lucky, she succumbs under the operation. But least lucky is the widow whose case does not yield to the manipulations of the *Dai*. And woe be to her if she belongs to a respectable family. Then they get up a ceremony in her honour, what they call a *cold Suttee*, they serve her with the best of viands, they ply her with sweet intoxicants, and they cap her last supper on earth with something that will settle their business. The widow is soon a *cold Suttee*, and is forthwith carried off to the burning ground (the pious Hindu can't keep a corpse in his house for ten minutes). This 'cold Suttee' means a double murder. Let us hope it is a very rare practice. But a case is known where the widow suspected foul play in the midst of the nocturnal festivities in her honour. She turned piteously to her mother and asked to be saved, but she was thus urged in reply :—'Drink, drink, my child, drink to cover thy mother's shame and to keep thy father's *abru*; drink it, dear daughter, see I am doing likewise!'

. . . . . .

"The only remedy is to dispossess caste of its power of excommunicating the widow who marries again. Government sanctions re-marriage, and caste opposes it. What

a position for the Government of an empire! It is all very well for English officials to say that the widow and her friends ought to defy caste. They do not know the terrible effect of the Mahajan's curse. The widow and her husband, and very often her and his families, are shunned like poison. Thus some forty people may suffer for the courage of two. They suffer in life and in death. No casteman joins them in any domestic ceremony; none of them can take part in the social affairs of any casteman. So cruelly rigid is the discipline, that it drew tears of anguish from that most patient Hindu martyr, Karsandas Mulji. He used to cry helplessly when his wife wanted to know when her family was to be re-admitted into the caste. Englishmen can have no idea of the bitterness of this social seclusion; it is worse than the bitterness of death. One result of the persecution is that few re-married couples live happily. They are hunted out of caste, out of profession, and if we are not quite wrong, out of part of their inheritance. And not being sufficiently educated to take to new modes of life, husband and wife pine away in despair, accuse each other of folly, and under a sense of injury they sometimes take to evil courses. What a triumph for Caste! That the widow marriage movement in India is making head in spite of such crushing opposition is a proof of its necessity and its ultimate success. If the Government only rules that Caste has no right to prevent re-marriage; if the public prosecutor is instructed to lay heavy damages against the Mahajan for putting a re-married widow out of caste, the reform will have an easy victory over prejudice. Is there no Englishman to put down this unnatural interference with a movement sanctioned by the law of God and man? Is there no Englishwoman to plead for the rights of her unfortunate sisters in India?

An eminent Mahratta Shastri had followed Vidiasagar's example at Poona and Bombay; but though Vishnu Shastri spent himself in the cause and did much solid work, he had had scant support. At Madras, in 1871 or 1872, a "Widow Marriage Association" had been started by M. R. R. T. Muttasamy Iyer, and in 1880 this was revived by Rajah Sir T. Madava Rao, Dewan Bahadur Ragoonath Rao, and others. At Bombay a Hindu gentleman, Madhavdas Rugnathdas, who had married a widow, used to afford shelter and support to all poor creatures who wished to re-marry, and had by his unostentatious friendliness helped not a few widows to happy homes. There was, however, no active sustained organization, and the problem of Hindu widowhood was as far from solution as ever. Malabari had thought about it for at least ten years, and knew well its difficulty. But he felt no doubt on one point, and that was this. Infant marriage had a great deal to do with unhappy widowhood. *Infant marriage!* Infant *betrothal* might be tolerated, but Infant *marriage*—irrevocable so far as the bride was concerned—and leading to the widowhood of

children who in some cases had hardly cut their milk teeth, was certainly most unnatural. The Native Press was on the whole alive to its unnaturalness, and often condemned the practice in no measured terms. Here, for example, is a translation of an article in the *Hitechhu*, which appeared in one of the *Spectators* of 1883.

"THE HORRORS OF INFANT MARRIAGE.

"A Brahmin betrothed his daughter in her infancy. The girl never saw her husband or the husband's house. On reaching years of discretion the husband turned out to be worthless and diseased. But knowing all this, the father, bound by caste rules, &c., to save the honour of the family, married his daughter to the same man. When without free choice one cannot pass a single day happily, how can one pass a whole life! The girl lived all along at her father's house. Now, when even ascetics at times long for social happiness, how could this young woman restrain herself? She managed to have private meetings with somebody in the village. But secret intercourse means deception for the woman, and thus shortly after our heroine felt embarrassed. What to do now? In spite of amulets and threads, and even drugs, her condition continued to grow worse. They then took her to her father-in-law's house. People there found out the secret. They, therefore, hesitated at first, but agreed to receive the daughter-in-law on condition that her parents should pay hush-money to the outraged husband.

Where could the wretched parents procure money from? They brought back the girl. Days after days passed by and her secret was made public by every waft of wind. The crisis approached nearer, and just a little while before all would be over, the dear mother started with her in a cart with the required amount for her father-in-law's. But unfortunately, whether through the jostles on the road or otherwise, the girl was overtaken by labour. Where to turn now?—without house or home, without relations or friends. But the shrewd mother, telling the driver she had to obey a call, at once made for an adjoining thicket with the daughter. The spot was scarcely reached when the latter gave birth to her child. O! thou unfortunate intruder, little dost thou know thou hast to leave this world within so short a space of time, to be born only to be killed! In a moment the fragile little thing was despatched and buried, and the heartless woman returned to the cart. Oh *Shiva! Shiva! Shiva!* What unnatural cruelty! But wait, reader, say, is this not the result of child marriage?"

A man like Malabari,* full of sympathy and

* The following extracts from an article in the *Harvest Field* for March, 1891, published after an interview which the Editor and a number of European friends had with Malabari at Bombay, bring out very well some of his personal characteristics:—

". . . There is no sham modesty on Mr. Malabari's part. You cannot be with him five minutes before feeling that he has a mind of his own and will speak it truly, and that there is nothing more abhorrent to him than unreality. He is a short man, with a face which, in repose, suggests gentleness, reflectiveness, devotion—the man of contemplation rather than of action. But it soon lights up, and on occasions can shoot forth flame. There is no line of weakness in the face, but all the marks of honesty and of intelligent benevolence. The most

tenderness for the suffering, could not but feel the acutest pain on reading all such tales of

charming thing about Mr. Malabari is the absence of self-consciousness. He strikes you quickly as a man who is in constant communion with his own convictions, whose chief anxiety is that they should find exact utterance. Given that, and he is not fettered as to what you may think of him or them. As a talker he is admirable. He expresses himself with great fulness and precision, and often with enviable felicity or force.

"Mr. Malabari's surroundings are quite subordinate to the man. Yet during a moment when he is called away we are curious to see something of them. In the centre of the room is a table, round which are ranged photographs of men whom he is in contact with—chiefly politicians in England, some of them the first men of the day. Three books lying there catch the eye—Drummond's 'Greatest Thing in the World,' Phillips Brooks' 'The Influence of Jesus,' and the New Testament. . . .

"Naturally, Mr. Malabari is the centre of the movement which has produced the Age of Consent Bill (now passed). He stands like a captain on the bridge, observes every variation of wind and current during the storm of opposition, and keeps his head perfectly cool through it all. He knows accurately who and what are the present agitators against the Bill, and has special means of gauging the value and strength of their reactionary efforts.

"Mr. Malabari is not a rich man, nor will he ever be. He pours all that he has, without reluctance and without stint, into the cause for which he lives. He is completely unmercenary, and will bequeath nothing to his children but the memory of a life nobly planned and grandly developed. Bonny children they are, too—four of them. We had the pleasure of seeing them all. 'What are you going to do with your eldest boy?' we asked him. 'I have no idea, and very little concern. He shall have a good education, and for the rest, if he fear God and be an honest man, I don't care what he does.' That same unworldliness runs all through. He has no prudence, as men commonly call prudence. It is enough for him to know that he has the

wrong and misery. This custom of Infant Marriage had worked havoc for a long time among the Parsis who had imitated the Hindus, and it had its votaries, or rather victims, even among Mahomedans. It sometimes led to evils the very mention of which would make one's hair stand on end. For instance, Malabari knew at Surat of a rape on a Parsi girl of ten by her husband. Of course, according to law, the husband was not punishable, for such rape was not, and is not, a crime. But the heart-rending shrieks of the

power to do something which his country needs, and he will throw his last rupee into the effort without a shiver.

"There he lives in his lofty garret—courting no man, but, with a determination that never wavers, doing a work that is beginning to shake India. If he lives awhile he will revolutionize it. But will he live? He is not strong, and he works intensely. He is spending his life as willingly as his money. India does not quite know, yet, all that it possesses in having a Malabari. And Malabari never thinks of what he is himself. He is utterly without ostentation. But if he be spared, history will yet have to find a high place for one who, born a Parsi, and deriving the springs of his influence really, though perhaps half unconsciously, from Christianity, is doing more than any other man in this age to emancipate the women of India from the disabilities that have harassed and debased them for centuries. The man who does that will do more than he means. He will enlarge the social life of India, but he will inevitably, also, transform its religious life. We leave Mr. Malabari in his garret, praying heartily that he may be permitted to carry out the benevolent designs which so completely possess him."

outraged child still ring in Malabari's ears. The Parsis—thank God—have succeeded in making such cases impossible, for under the Parsi Matrimonial Act no Parsi husband can force his wife, who is under fourteen, to live with him. But as the law stood before 1891, no Hindu girl at least could deny herself to her husband, if she was ten years old.

Malabari was not a Sanskrit scholar, like Ram Mohan Roy or Vidiasagar, and he was not a Hindu. But he felt vividly the sin, the folly, the unnaturalness of this custom of Infant Marriage, and traced the woes of widowhood to this cause. How this pernicious custom could be abolished was a question which long perplexed him. He knew full well the internal economy of Hindu homes. He was not unaware that many of these were happy homes in a way. But was there not a large amount of misery which could be easily avoided? And was not this practice a dead obstacle in the way of female education and of national progress? The evil was admitted all round. And surely it could not be an evil without a remedy.

Diffident and distrustful of himself, Malabari

did not make his *début* as a social reformer with any quack nostrums warranted to cure the distempers of Hindu society. He was willing, to quote his own words, to be a "mere camp follower," if a Hindu leader would but lead the way. But he was thoroughly familiar with the tremendous difficulties of Hindu reformers and the fate which had overtaken some of them. A Hindu sovereign could have easily put an end to such practices, if convinced of their illegality from the Shastric texts. But an alien Government was a Kumbhakaran * in social matters, extremely difficult to awake to its responsibility, while the stronghold of Hindu usage and superstistition was harder to conquer than Ravan's Lanka.

What, then, was an outsider to do for the victims of these baneful customs? Was he to fold his arms and do nothing because he was an outsider? Had humanity as a whole any outsiders *within itself?* Was not this a patent contradiction in terms? Had those great and good men who had abolished negro-slavery ever felt any hesitation on the ground

* A sleeping giant.

that they were outsiders? Was it not the plain duty of every man to do what lay in his power to mitigate the hard lot of his brothers and sisters? Were not the suffering Hindu widows, the suffering child-brides, with their heads shaved for the sin of losing their husbands, his own sisters, though he was a Parsi? He had not a particle of vanity in him, but he knew that earnestness was a power in itself, and that as he felt keenly the sorrows of Hindu women, he could plead their cause with eloquent directness and moving pathos. Still there was the question, "What would people say if he placed himself in the front in this fashion?" Would they not attack him as a presumptuous youth, and credit him with no other motive but self-aggrandisement and vainglory? Yes, they would. He had won golden opinions, as a poet and a journalist. His life had been pure and self-sacrificing. But the world at large knew him only as the editor of a prominent paper and an able writer, and the world at large would listen easily to those who would attribute worldly motives to him. It was an enterprise "of great pith and moment." It

would tax all his energy and resources, and would bring him probably nothing but abuse and defamation. But was it manly at all to be afraid of consequences—when the finger of Duty pointed clearly to one direction only and to no other? Was it not clear that female education would never make any appreciable progress so long as girls had to be married away in their tender years? Had not Keshub Chunder Sen proved, by the opinions of medical experts in India, that Infant Marriage led to an unnaturally early development of sexual functions, and that such development was in the long run ruinous to the physical and therefore to the mental strength of the nation? Was it not Infant Marriage, again, that led mainly to enforced and unhappy widowhood? And were not unhappy widows as great an object of pity and sympathy as any other unhappy creatures? Was there any religion or morality, any reason or sense, in shaving and degrading them, and subjecting them to a hard, almost merciless, discipline, as if every one of them was sure to go astray without it? The picture of poor widowed children undergoing the slow invisible tortures

of a ruthless custom, bred of iniquity and unnaturalness, was ever present to Malabari, and gave him at length the courage of a hero and the meekness of a martyr. I am using these words advisedly. Few know how sensitive is this noble Parsi's heart, and how much he has suffered during the last six years. He is not likely to live very long. Practically, to quote the words of an independent observer, he "has given his life and fortune away to the cause of the weak." He has been judged most uncharitably by some of his contemporaries; but posterity will do him justice.

Having resolved to devote himself to the eradication of these evils, Malabari next thought about the ways and means; and about the plan of his campaign. He had studied the question for a long time, and he knew the *pros* and *cons* of every remedy that occurred to him so well, that it was impossible for him to be sanguine about any of them. His main object was, as so often explained by him, to draw the attention of wiser and cleverer men to the two evils, to see if a national association could be started, and then to place at its disposal all the ability that

he could command. But how could many minds be brought to bear on the problem? If he merely went on describing the evils and suggesting the remedies that occurred to him, there might be some academical discussion, but there would probably be no results. Malabari well knew the formidable difficulties which had presented themselves when female education was first taken in hand by a previous generation, and he well knew how these difficulties had been overcome through official co-operation and sympathy. He had no horror of officials. He knew them too well to suspect them of evil motives. He knew what help he had received from them in carrying out his scheme of vernacular translations. He knew how official guidance had served as a *kamarband* * for the invertebrates of society in many matters necessary for the well-being of the people. He knew who had abolished Suttee and Infanticide, and introduced Vaccination and Sanitation. He was averse to legislation on the subjects which had interested him so deeply, but he thought the moral support of the State was essential. Jotting down his

* Waistband.

thoughts, therefore, in the form of Notes, he presented himself one day in May or June, 1884, to Lord Ripon, the Viceroy, at Simla.

Lord Ripon, Mr. Gibbs, Mr. Ilbert, Sir Steuart Bayley, and other members of the Supreme Government, struck by Malabari's fervour, promised to consider the Notes, and they of course kept their promise. Lord Ripon, on August 20, 1884, wrote to him to say that the two questions of Infant Marriage and Enforced Widowhood were "practically branches of one and the same question, the position of women in India," that the question was, "perhaps the most pressing, at the present moment, of Indian social questions," that the practices undoubtedly led to great evils, but did not in themselves involve crime nor were so necessarily and inevitably mischievous as to call for suppression by law, if they were sanctioned by the general opinion of the society in which they prevailed; and his Lordship concluded his letter as follows:—

"In such a case the Government cannot take action without having before it full information as to the sentiment and opinion of the community interested; and in consulting, as I understand that you are doing, influential

persons throughout India on this point, you are, I believe, taking the most practical step which is at present possible towards the attainment of the objects which you have at heart. I shall rejoice if the result of your inquiries should show that there exists an opening for the Government to mark in some public manner the view which it entertains of the great importance of reform in these matters of Infant Marriage and Enforced Widowhood."

The other members of Government wrote in the same strain, but every one expressed his sympathy with the cause. The Lieut.-Governors of the North-West Provinces and the Panjaub also wrote to him encouragingly at this early stage, and the Lieut.-Governor of Bengal followed.

To obtain the opinions of other influential persons, official and non-official, Malabari had a large number of his Notes printed, and on August 15, 1884, submitted them with a modest printed letter for consideration. The result was their discussion by the press, and their translation by the native papers into almost all the vernaculars of India. The criticisms were generally favourable at first. On September 11, 1884, the Supreme Government forwarded the Notes to the

Local Governments and Administrations for their opinion, and also for consulting representatives of native opinion. It would have been much better if the revised Notes published by Malabari in October had been so referred, for these latter contained many more practical suggestions than the first. It is curious to find that in November, 1884, Sir F. Roberts, then Commander-in-Chief of the Madras Army, directed that no recruits would be allowed to marry until three years after their enlistment. This was in effect a recognition of the principle laid down by Malabari, that the State could prefer unmarried to married men for its services, in order to discourage premature marriage. The suggestion, however, met with no favourable reception. The suggestions which were most approved were (1) the formation of a national association, (2) the introduction of lessons on these subjects in educational books, (3) and the enactment of a regulation by the Universities that after a certain number of years none who were not bachelors would be admitted to the degree of B.A. This last suggestion was supported by a gentleman who

was an out-and-out opponent of Malabari in other respects—I mean Mr. Chiplonkar, the able Secretary of the Sarvajanik Sabha, Poona —and by several other distinguished Hindus who admitted that, according to the Hindu Shastras, as well as Hindu traditions, marriage should succeed the completion of the long period prescribed for study.

It is unnecessary to dwell on the events that followed the publication of Malabari's Notes—the Surat widows' appeal to the Nagar Shett in January, 1885—the Nowsari widows' appeal to the Gaekwar in April—the campaign of Malabari in the Panjaub in September and October—the effect produced in India by the revelations of Mr. Stead in November —the strong advocacy of legislation on the subject of Infant Marriage by Mr. Ranade in December, in the preface to the publication of papers bearing on the enactment of Act xv. of 1856 — the speeches delivered by Malabari at Agra, Alighar, Bareilly, Allahabad, Benares, and Muthra in February, 1886 — the memorial of Sir T. Madhao Rao and other leading citizens of Madras to the Viceroy (Lord Dufferin) in

March, 1886, for fixing the marriageable age of Hindu girls at ten—the Viceroy's reply that the prevailing customs were "deleterious to morality" and that the movement had "his sympathy and approval" *—the letters to Malabari from Sir Maxwell Melvill and Sir Raymond West, of May and July, respectively, enclosing draft Bills for the consideration of

* "H. E. the Viceroy said he was very glad to meet the deputation. The subject which they brought to his notice was a very important one. There was nothing so well engrained in the British system of government as a fixed determination, *as far as possible*, not to interfere in the established national customs of the people. That was the policy of his predecessors, and to it he meant strictly to adhere; *but it did not follow that there should be no departure from that policy*, and that the present Viceroy and the members of his Government should not watch with sympathy and approval any movement that had for its object the reformation of social customs. Personally he thought that no customs could be more deleterious to morality, and fraught with greater evils, than that mentioned in the address. Every European nation would look upon it with horror, and for his own part he would not like his child to enter into so momentous a contract under such conditions. If native opinion was not absolutely unanimous, there should at least be a general consensus of native opinion in favour of the movement. He had not yet been sufficiently long in the country to gauge the character, force, and extent of native opinion on the movement. More than that he was not disposed to say at present, and they would not expect him to say more. At all events, they might go away with the satisfaction that their movement had his sympathy and approval. He was much gratified to see so many men of position and intelligence taking interest in so important a movement."

those concerned—the Meerut memorial in August, 1886, praying that the limit of age might be legislatively fixed at 12 for girls and 16 for boys—the Madhava Bagh meeting in September, 1886, to protest against any contemplated interference, legislative or executive—the interview of the Shastris with Lord Reay on September 13, 1886—the Gaekwar's letter to Malabari of July 15th *—the publication of a paper in the September number of *The Nineteenth Century* on the Hindu Widow, by Mr. Devendranath Dass; and another in the October number of *The Asiatic Quarterly*

* H. H. the Maharaja of Baroda, the premier Hindu State in India, wrote a letter to Malabari, on the 15th of July, 1886, from which a few extracts are here subjoined:—

". . . I have all along studied and watched with interest the stirring controversy on Infant Marriage and Enforced Widowhood against which you have so ably raised your voice, and for which you deserve the thanks of every right-minded citizen who is desirous of seeing the social regeneration of India. Evils like these call loudly for action, and action alone can remedy them. . . . Nothing is rarer in this world than the courage which accepts all personal responsibilities and carries it unbending to the end. By your agitation you have, in a way, electrified the individual instinct of conversation into one of sympathy. This awakening, which you have had the honour to effect by a, so to say, intellectual contagion, I would not let go to sleep. I am ready to help on the good cause by giving it all the support it deserves. . . . Though I am fully aware that it is difficult to raise the age, I would not like to see it under full thirteen for consummation."

Review, by Dr. Hunter—the final Resolution of the Government of India on Malabari's Notes, in October, 1886—the publication of the opinions of Hindu gentlemen consulted on the subject in the form of Government Selections, in January, 1887—the attacks on Malabari and Ranade by some of the Poona lecturers, in February—and lastly, the publication of the opinions given to Malabari, in the form of a companion volume to the Selections. Besides these may be mentioned the extremely thoughtful pamphlet of Mr. Ardesir Framjee, and several other interesting publications. Thus, those brief Notes of Malabari have gathered round them a vast amount of literature, and Malabari has certainly succeeded in bringing the best and wisest intellects to bear on the question. This alone is no small achievement, and his worst detractors cannot but admit that this achievement is to his credit. On the other hand, they ought also, in fairness, to admit that they have been guilty of the seven mistakes which Malabari has enumerated in the following extract:—

"It may be remembered that every paper I have

written upon the subject of marriage reform in India has been marked 'Submitted for Consideration.' The first memo. was so marked, and it was for the reader to approve the contents or not, without questioning motives and entering into other personal details. Some people did the latter, simply because I happened to be a Parsi. That was Mistake number One, since magnified a hundredfold by a hundred false steps, at each of which the man was assailed and his measures almost entirely kept out of sight.

"(*b*) It may also be remembered that I have invariably spoken of the two specific evils as *infant* marriages and *enforced* widowhood, and that my opponents have made a point of mistaking them for *early* marriages and widowhood in general. This has in most cases been done on purpose, and it has exposed me to great annoyance, as it has greatly obscured the points at issue. I have often tried to explain incidentally in the course of the discussion, that it is *infant* marriages alone that I object to, and that it is the prevention by social conspiracy of widow marriages, declared valid by Shastras and by the British law, and the endless persecution of widows intending to re-marry, that called for a protest. But the opponents knew that their only chance was to 'mix up,' and so they went on repeating that I wanted Hindu girls to remain unmarried till 20–25 and *all* Hindu widows to be remarried! This was Mistake number Two.

"(*c*) The third mistake was that I had grossly exaggerated the evils. Now this is a matter of difference of opinion. The opponents say I have overstated the case. I say I have understated it. Let it be noted that the evils are scattered over a vast area, and that all through-

out they cannot be the same in extent and intensity. We have to judge of the matter by caste as well as by tract. Thus, what obtains in one caste or in one part of the country may be more or less absent from another caste or another part o the country. Those belonging to the latter, therefore, find it easy, perhaps necessary from their point of view, to charge me with exaggeration, libel, &c., when I am describing evils as they actually exist in the former. This seems to me to be the secret of the Exaggeration theory which is shared even by two or three European friends. The European is naturally more sceptical than the Hindu, because the former cannot conceive of a state of affairs which is, happily, absent from European society. The charitable Hindu would be equally sceptical as regards some of the social enormities prevailing in European countries. But because one is not personally acquainted with a particular phase of social evil, is it fair that he should charge another who knows as libelling him and his people? My statements are generally made on accurate first-hand information, acquired by personal contact with the victims themselves or a study of the literature of the subject as relating to particular localities. Not to say anything of marriage before the babies are born and while they are at breast, I ask if Hindu girls are not usually married at about 8? If a mean average were taken all over the country I fear it would not go beyond 7. If in some parts marriages take place at 11, in many they occur before 9. When a marriage is postponed, it is done out of sheer necessity, the absence of a suitable match or want of means. Where marriages, as a rule, take place so early, a good deal of harm must necessarily follow. I admit that in some cases parental control may

avert this harm. But such enlightened parents in India are in woful minority. If you advise an uneducated friend to postpone consummation till a proper age, he will turn upon you with the unanswerable question—what were the couple married for? Then, as to unequal marriages, those between 50 and 10, for instance, are they so very rare in all parts of India? And what can be the result of such unions, with lifelong widowhood staring the brides in the face? What are we to think of the public opinion of a country in which such marriages are possible? On the other hand, there are cases in which the boy-husband is younger than the girl-wife. The latter grows rapidly, while the former has a comparatively slower growth, and sometimes does not grow at all. Is not this a great wrong to both parties? But I will not pursue the subject. Let the critics go over different parts of the country, and study the different customs, and then come forward to confirm or contradict my statements. They have never done so, nor attempted to do so, but have contented themselves with ignoring facts not within their personal observation. This is Mistake number Three.

"(*d*) Another mistake on the part of my critics is that I have been clamouring for legislation. As a matter of fact, I declared in the very first Note my aversion to legislative interference. I 'submitted' other methods for 'consideration,' which were approved by some and objected to by others. As the discussion went on, I 'submitted' more suggestions made to me by friends, mostly Hindus. It was for the community concerned to accept or to reject those suggestions. Too much stress is being laid in some quarters on the draft bills sketched by Messrs. Melvill and West. It is needless to refute the

assertions of mischief-makers in this regard. The drafts are still before the public, who can see that they were not at all meant for immediate adoption by the whole community or by sections of the community, but were intended to guide those who might in the future think it necessary to appeal to the Legislature. No one, who has read the drafts and the remarks prefacing them, or who has any acquaintance with their authors, would take them amiss for a moment. Let us hope this too was only a Mistake, Mistake number Four.

"(*e*) But why did you at all consult the officials and publish their opinions?—ask my indignant critics. Because I knew my critics too well to trust only to their co-operation. In consulting official opinion I had the example of others before me. What would have been the fate of the agitation against Suttee, Infanticide, Compulsory Widowhood, Hook-swinging and other pastimes, but for official co-operation? How far would Ram Mohan and Keshub Chunder, for instance, have succeeded without the moral support of Bentinck and Lawrence? As to publishing official and non-official opinions, surely they were not intended to be pigeon-holed? Those who think so make a bad mistake, Mistake number Five.

"(*f*) The sixth mistake has regard to my motive; that I undertook this work for cheap popularity. The absurdity of such a supposition is self-evident. I was one of the most popular men in India, if not the most popular of my years, when I took up the question. I took it up with a full knowledge of the sacrifices it would entail. I took it up as my life work. It is scarcely three years now since I began when people are talking about my having become 'thoroughly discredited' and abusing me as never was the worst enemy of the country abused

before. All this does not look like popularity, and it constitutes Mistake number Six.

"(*g*) The last and the worst mistake is to threaten to 'crush that Malabari.' Here the opponents have entirely mistaken their man. There is only one way of silencing him, by showing honest work. He does not claim their respect or esteem; he never expected favours from them, has ceased to hope even for common justice from such quarters. But can nothing make these gentlemen see that less than half the labour and ingenuity they spend in attempting to 'crush' a solitary well-wisher might, if otherwise employed, bring about the reformation of a whole community?"

In 1887 the social reform movement became less academical and more practical. An association in Sind, the first of its kind, was registered under Section 26 of the Companies Act vi., of 1882, after a prolonged correspondence with Government. A similar association was also registered in Ahmedabad. These registered associations were corporate bodies with perpetual succession, and their rules required certain pledges to be taken by their members. Some of the obligations imposed upon these associations by the Act are rather troublesome, and it is well worth the consideration of the Legislature whether the law on this subject should not be modified. A few words intro-

duced into Section 26, empowering the Local Governments in their discretion to exempt such associations from such obligations, will be a great boon. Under any circumstances Government should not tax such bodies. Under Section 26 they can be licensed and registered only on proving that they are not formed for profit, but for promoting some useful public object; and it is not therefore fair that they should be made to pay several fees, as if they were commercial companies. The Government of India has, indeed, reduced the registration fee to Rs. 50, and remitted the heavy stamp duty leviable on the memorandum and the articles of association; but the fees which have yet to be paid are the same as those payable by companies. This is certainly an anomaly. The registration fee, again, is susceptible of further reduction.

Besides these registered associations, it may be mentioned that the first Kayastha Conference was also opened in 1887. The Kayasthas are a large class of Hindus who are mostly in official or professional employment. The late Mr. Justice Nanabhai Haridas of Bombay was one of them. Mr. R. C. Dutt,

the author of "Ancient India," is, I believe, a Kayastha. Several Kayastha youths—and even Kayastha ladies—have been to England. They have an educational institution of their own, and a large fund. The Kayastha Conference was established with the object of welding together the various sections of the community into a homogeneous, harmonious body, improving its material and intellectual condition, and introducing social reforms. The Kayasthas have since been holding a Conference every year at important centres, and their progress has been acknowledged on all hands.

Another Conference, also—the first of its kind—was held in December, 1887, at Madras. It was called the National Social Conference of India, and, like the Kayastha Conference, it has been since repeated every year. It has its circles, like the National Congress, and its sittings usually commence after those of the Congress. I shall have shortly to refer to a few of its important resolutions.

In 1888 the celebrated Rajputana Sabha was established through the exertions of Colonel (now General) Walter, Agent Governor-General, Rajputana. One of the rules of this

association was that "boys and girls should not be married before the age of eighteen and fourteen respectively." Its other rules prescribed a scale of marriage and other customary expenses. The Sabha is mainly composed of Rajput princes and chiefs, and it has, according to all accounts, already done considerable good. Its example has been extremely wholesome, and the National Social Conference, held at Allahabad in December, 1888, nine months after the formation of the Sabha, recommended *inter alia* "the gradual raising of the marriageable age to the standard fixed by the Rajput chiefs."

In 1889, the Government made rules under the Infanticide Act (viii. of 1870) for curtailing marriage expenses among the Lewa and Kadwa Kunbis of Gujarat, and prescribed a fine for their violation. The communities concerned were in favour of such a measure, and we may hope that this experiment will not be a failure. A similar experiment, tried in 1856 among the Sayads of Tatta, by Mr. Gibbs, who was then Assistant Commissioner, but who rose to be a member of the Supreme Council, had proved successful.

In 1889, also, the agitation for amending the law regarding the "protected age," which had been commenced as early as 1885, attracted considerable attention, and the Social Conference which met at Bombay in December passed by a large majority, after a very warm discussion, a resolution that the Government should be moved to amend the Penal Code so as to extend protection to girls, married as well as unmarried, at least up to the age of twelve—in other words, to treat intercourse with such girls, with or without their consent, as a felony. A few months later occurred the case of Hari Maiti * at Calcutta, and the very strong memorial sent by the president of the Social Conference on the subject of the resolution was followed by another equally strong from the Health Society of Calcutta; a third, which was quite unique in its character, from fifty-five lady doctors practising in India; and a fourth from two thousand ladies of all classes in the Bombay Presidency. This last was addressed to Her Majesty the Queen-Empress.

During the earlier stages of the Social Re-

* He did to death his child-wife, Phulmoni, aged about eleven, in an act of forcible intercourse.

form movement, a dead set had been made against legislation of any kind in social matters, and the resolution of the Government of India, already referred to, had finally set this question at rest. But the well-known case of Rukhmabai * showed that the English-made civil law, as it stood, went far beyond the ancient Hindu law, and even modern caste usage, in enforcing marital rights; and the case of Phulmoni, which arose five years later, showed that the criminal law, instead of giving effect to the prohibitions of Hindu law against premature intercourse, practically authorized such intercourse with girls of ten. Both these questions were only indirectly social questions. They had been admittedly dealt with by the Legislature, and the Legislature having never given a pledge that it would not interfere to prevent the commission of offences, or to lessen the rigour of its own sanctions, was perfectly free to amend or repeal what it had at first ordained.

* She was married when a child. Her marriage was never consummated; but the High Court passed a decree in favour of her husband—whom she loathed—awarding him *restitution* of conjugal rights. The husband, under the law, was entitled to have his wife imprisoned on her refusal to cohabit with him.

In the spring of 1870, therefore, when Malabari visited England for the first time,* these two questions were nearly ripe for solution. Curiously enough, both had been mooted in 1885—for Rukhmabai's case had

* Malabari's second trip to Europe, in 1890, undertaken solely for health, was perhaps more disappointing in that respect than his first visit. During the previous visit he appears to have selected a little "earthly paradise" in Switzerland, where he thought he might spend a few weeks of complete rest, should he ever go back to Europe. So he slipped out of Bombay quietly on the 1st of April, 1890, with Lucerne for his objective.

The sea-voyage seems to have done him much good. But on arriving at Lucerne he found it almost snow-bound. His friend, Dr. Bhabha, took him about to other parts, which were equally inhospitable. Malabari was, therefore, taken over to London, where he lived in seclusion till August, resuming a study of certain phases of English life and character, which he had to leave off in the year before. Absolute rest was impossible to this restless being. So he began "vivisecting the Briton," as he put it; bright and cheery as ever, in spite of bad weather, and an epidemic of influenza raging around. This occupation, however, was interrupted by the serious illness of his friend, whom he had to watch day and night for some time, and who, he said, "had all but gone" twice during the period.

His letters in June made me very anxious, as I pictured him surrounded by sickness and gloom, tending another while he himself needed friendly attention. But in the beginning of July he wrote—"We have pulled the Doctor through, and I am now pulling myself together. In less than a fortnight I may abandon myself to a course of reckless dissipation, walks and rides and excursions, and no end of sight-seeing. Business is very slack. Just now I am trying to nurse some of our political friends on both sides of the House. How little I knew they knew so little about India! We are ourselves not a little to blame for this bitter ignorance."

arisen in that year, and the revelations made by Mr. Stead having directed attention to the Indian Criminal Law, a proposal for amending it had been made in the same year, in a series of letters to the *Indian Spectator*, which were afterwards published by Malabari in the form of a pamphlet, and which elicited a large number of opinions in favour of the proposal.

Malabari had been advised to take a voyage to England for the benefit of his health. But soon after his arrival in London he quietly commenced to interest influential persons in what he called his life-work. He had many sincere friends, and with their advice he chalked out a programme for himself, which he was able to carry out during his six months' stay. But he had to work very hard, and his health, instead of improving, sometimes grew worse. One night especially, returning home from a private meeting after twelve, he felt so ill and worn out, that he instructed his affectionate host and school-brother, Dr. Bhabha, to bury his body, in the event of death, in a poor man's grave in London, but to send his heart to India, to

be interred "at the foot of the Himalayas under the eternal snows."

In spite of bodily sufferings, however, his will and earnestness never flagged, and his Appeal on behalf of the Daughters of India, published as a pamphlet, and his letters to the *Times*, and other leading journals, followed by discriminating criticisms of such an eminent authority as Sir William Hunter, drew public attention to the anomalies of the Indian laws and to the position of child-wives and child-widows in India. Almost the entire English press * expressed its sympathy with

* See *Daily News*, July 24; *The Queen*, July 30 and Aug. 2; *The Woman*, July 31; *The Echo*, July 31 and Aug. 20; *The Church Times*, Aug. 1 and 29, and Sept. 26; *The Lancet*, Aug. 16; *The Times*, Aug. 20 and Oct. 7; *The Pall Mall Gazette*, July 31; *The Jewish World*, Aug. 1; *The Woman's Penny Paper*, Aug. 2; *The Manchester Guardian*, Aug. 5; *The Methodist Recorder*, Aug. 14; *The Globe*, Aug. 20; *The Free Press*, Aug. 21; *The St. James's Gazette*, Aug. 21; *The Leeds Mercury*, Aug. 21; *The Birmingham Post*, Aug. 21; *The Home News*, Aug. 8; *The Yorkshire Post*, Aug. 16; *The Liverpool Post*, Aug. 19 and 20; *The Star*, Aug. 20; *The Yorkshire Herald*, Aug. 21; *The Yorkshire Post*, Aug. 21; *The Christian World*, Aug. 21; *The Lady*, Aug. 21; *The Speaker*, Sept. 27; *The Manchester Guardian*, Aug. 19; *The Scottish Leader*, Aug. 21; *The Western Press*, Aug. 21; *The Sheffield Independent*, Aug. 21; *The Manchester Courier*, Aug. 22; *The Evening News*, Aug. 28; *The Daily Chronicle*, Aug. 28; *The Record*, Aug. 28; *The Guardian*, Aug. 27; *The Princess*, Aug. 30; *The Freeman*, Aug. 30; *The Methodist Times*, Sept. 18; *The*

the cause advocated by Malabari, though of course there were differences of opinion as to the remedies suggested by him.

This appeal of Malabari was published on the 11th of June, 1890, and on the 14th of July, 1890, a private meeting was held at Mrs. (now Lady) Jeune's, 37, Wimpole Street, W., to discuss some of his proposals.

The Right Honourable Lord Reay was in the chair, and amongst those present were Her Royal Highness Princess Christian, Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Connaught, the Earl and Countess of Aberdeen, the Countess of Arran, Mrs. Gladstone, Mrs. Goschen, the Countess of Jersey, the Countess of Galloway, Lady Wantage, Lady Edward Cavendish, Lady George Hamilton, Mrs. Fawcett, Lady Reay, Lady Knightley, the Hon. Miss Kinnaird, Miss Morley, Lady Grant Duff, Lady Lumsden, Mr. Munro Ferguson, M.P., and Lady Helen Ferguson, Lady Rothschild, Professor Max Müller and Mrs. Max Müller, Mr. and Mrs. Jeune, Lady Drummond, Mrs. F. Morrison, Mrs. Wynford Philips, Dr. and Mrs. Fraser, Sir Charles Aitchison, Sir Alfred Lyall, Sir Charles Turner, Sir William Markby, Sir William Moore, Sir John Kennaway, Bart., M.P., Sir Gerald Seymour

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British Medical Journal, Sept. 20; *The Saturday Review*, Sept. 20; *The Westminster Gazette*, Sept. 20 and Oct. 11; *The North British Daily Mail*, Sept. 20; *The Commonwealth*, Sept. 25; *The National Reformer*, Sept. 7; *Charity*, Sept. 15; *England*, Sept. 28; *The Morning Advertiser*, September 24; *The Weekly Review*, Oct. 11; *The Leamington Courier* September 13.

Fitzgerald, Mr. Mocatta, Mr. McEwan, M.P., and Mrs. McEwan, Mr. J. Noble, Mr. and Mrs. MacIvre, Mr. Tupper, Mr. and Mrs. Cowasji Jehangir, Mr. Gazdar, Mr. Malabari, and others.

Letters of apology were received from the following, who were unavoidably absent:—The Archbishop of Canterbury and Mrs. Benson, the Marchioness of Tavistock, the Bishop of London and Mrs. Temple, the Earl of Northbrook, the Earl of Harrowby, Sir Charles Bernard, Mr. Ilbert, the Lady Leigh, Sir William Hunter, Mr. Samuel Smith, M.P., Mr. McLaren, M.P., and others.

The following Resolutions were discussed and adopted, with a view of their being submitted to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India and the Indian Government:—

Resolution 1.—Proposed by Sir William Moore, seconded by — Tupper, Esq., and supported by Dr. Fraser—"That the age of consent should be raised to 12."

Resolution 2.—Proposed by Sir Charles Aitchison, and seconded by the Countess of Jersey—"That provision be made for enabling infant marriages to be set aside unless ratified by consent within a reasonable time of the proper age."

Resolution 3.—Proposed by Sir William Markby and seconded by Mr. Gazdar—"That the suit for restitution of conjugal rights, which is founded upon ecclesiastical law, and has been repudiated in its coercive form in all countries of Europe, ought never to have been introduced into India; that the continued prosecution of such a suit is likely to produce injustice; and that the whole subject requires reconsideration at the hands of the Government,

with a due regard to the marriage law and the habits and customs of the people of India."

Resolution 4.—Proposed by Professor Max Müller and seconded by Sir John Kennaway, Bart., M.P.—"That any legal obstacles that still stand in the way of the re-marriage of widows should be removed."

These Resolutions were, in due course, sent to the authorities. Malabari was also instrumental in forming a strong committee in England for improving the position of women in India, which now consists of the following members :—

The Earl of Northbrook, Lord and Lady Reay, the Marquis and Marchioness of Ripon, the Marquis and Marchioness of Dufferin, the Earl of Kinnaird, Sir Charles and Lady Aitchison, Professor and Mrs. Max Müller, Mr. and Mrs. Ilbert, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Smith, the Hon. Misses Kinnaird, Mr. and Lady Helen Ferguson, Mr. and Mrs. Jeune, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Miss Frances Power Cobbe, Cardinal Manning, Mr. and Mrs. Childers, Mr. Leonard Courtney, the Countess of Jersey, Lady Hobhouse, Professor Bryce, M.P., Sir William and Lady Muir (Edinburgh), Sir William and Lady Wedderburn, the Duke of Westminster, the Lady Leigh, the Lady Edward Cavendish, Mrs. Fawcett, Miss Agnes Garrett, Sir John Kennaway, Bart., M.P., and Lady Kennaway, Lord and Lady Tennyson, Lord and Lady Wynford, Lady Lyall, Mrs. Frank Morrison, Sir William and Lady Hunter, Sir William and Lady Markby, Sir William Moore, the Hon. Hallam Tenny-

son and Mrs. Tennyson, Mr. and Mrs. Caine, Miss Marston Miss E. A. Manning, Mr. and Mrs. Percy Bunting, Sir Andrew Clark, Dr. W. S. Playfair, Sir Monier and Lady Williams, the Bishop of Carlisle, the Bishop of Exeter, the Bishop of Durham, the Rev. Canon Wilberforce, Dowager Lady Stanley of Alderley, Mr. James Samuelson, the Rev. Mr. Barnett and Mrs. Barnett, the Rev. Dr. Lindsay (Glasgow), Mrs. Josephine Butler, Mrs. Wynford Philips, Mr. Justice Scott and Mrs. Scott, Lord Lawrence, Mr. Samuel Laing, Lady Herschell, Mr. Herbert Spencer, the Countess of Galloway, Miss Louisa Stevenson (Edinburgh), the Dowager Countess of Mayo, Lord Stanley of Alderley, Mr. Justice Kemball and Mrs. Kemball, the Bishop of Liverpool, the Rev. Canon McCormick, Rev. the Hon. Carr Glyn, Sir Henry and Lady Cunningham, Sir Rivers and Lady Thompson, Dr. George Smith, Mrs. Rukhmabai, the Hon. Chandos Leigh, Mrs. Henry Ware, Rev. Prebendary Forrest, Sir George Campbell, Rev. Canon Duckworth, the Dean of Westminster, Mr. and Mrs. Whitley Stokes, Sir James Fitz-James Stephen and Lady Stephen, the Duke and Duchess of Argyll, the Duke of Fife, Archbishop Plunket of Dublin, Lord and Lady Randolph Churchill, the Earl of Rosebery, Mrs. (Dr.) Scharlieb, Miss (Dr.) Ellaby, Mr. H. W. Primrose, Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Wood, Mr. Samuel Digby, the Rev. Brooke Lambert, Mrs. W. Dixon (Dublin), the Right Hon. Sir U. K. Shuttleworth, M.P., Mr. and Mrs. Walter McLaren, Mr. and Mrs. Geary, the Rev. Dr. Fraser and Mrs. Fraser, Mr. and Mrs. C. Schwann, Mr. and Mrs. M. Ghose, Mr. J. T. Petrocokino, and others.

This is admittedly the most influential Com-

mittee yet formed in England on India's behalf. It represents leaders of thought, as also of the moral and social movements at work in that country. The governing Anglo-Indian element is also very strongly represented on the Committee. It shows no small amount of organizing powers to be able to form such an association, but Malabari insists on giving the credit of it all to "the women of England."

Amongst the numerous friends of India, who encouraged our reformer during his sojourn in London, was Mr. Gladstone, who wrote to him once more, expressing "the warm sympathy" with which he had followed the movement. "As to the initiative," Mr. Gladstone added, "there must be division of labour, and I am not in a position to take a leading or an early part." He concluded, however, with the hope that "an appropriate opportunity *may* arise."

Malabari left London about the middle of September, reaching Trieste on the 1st October, 1890, after a fortnight spent over the Continent. Before starting back for India he found several farewell messages waiting for him on

board the *Imperator*. Professor Max Müller bade him be of good cheer. Sir W. W. Hunter again urged him to take more care of himself, adding, "Yours is far too precious a life for such risks." The following note from Mr. Samuel Smith expresses the feeling of what may be styled the Parliamentary party of reform: "I congratulate you with all my heart upon the wonderful success of your movement. I never knew public opinion to ripen so rapidly on any question as it has done on this subject of infant marriages. We must thank God, who has put it into your heart to move in the matter. I trust that your health will not break down. Your life is most valuable to India. Please take care of it. I pray God long to bless you and guide you." The last letter to reach him in Europe was from H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, who, after expressing his own satisfaction and that of H.R.H. the Duchess at "such good results" of his visit, and that "such a large and influential number of people at home" had been interested in the subject, added, "I hope we may soon look forward to seeing some results after all your labours." His Royal Highness thus concluded

the letter: "I can assure you that Her Majesty the Queen-Empress takes a keen interest in a question which so deeply affects the happiness and prosperity of so large a number of her Indian daughters. Wishing you a happy return home to your country and to your family, Believe me, Yours sincerely, ARTHUR."

The public proceedings in England, between July and September, produced their inevitable reflex action in India. The agitation there, regarding the age of consent, or rather the protected age, had already attracted the attention of the Government of India, and in July, 1890, they were nearly prepared to amend the Penal Code. They were also prepared, at a fitting opportunity, to amend the Civil Procedure Code by making it discretionary with judges to award imprisonment in execution of decrees for restitution of conjugal rights. But the Government of India objected altogether to the second resolution, and I think rightly. They were also of opinion that there were no legal obstacles in the way of the re-marriage of widows.

Malabari's own position will appear clearly

from this interesting account of an interview published by the *Bombay Gazette* * after his return to India :—

"The leader of Indian reform has apparently gained little—except for his good cause—from his sojourn in a more bracing clime. Those who saw him before he started for England and have seen him since are certain not to think of his journey as a holiday, for he has come back with all the signs of hard work, and looks as different as can be from the traveller returned from a six-months' trip to England. To a friend who welcomed him back the other day he gave a quiet but cordial greeting, and then seemed ready enough to speak freely upon all that he had seen and heard and done during the last six months. When asked what impressions he had brought back from the West, his reply was characteristic :—

"GENERAL IMPRESSIONS.

"'In spite of pressing engagements I contrived to see a good deal of English life, at home and outside, in the spheres of politics, literature, science, the professions, as well as of philanthropy; in regard to the domestic relations, and as contrasted with life abroad. Much of what I saw was disappointing, but there was much more of it that seemed full of hope. I can tell you little of this just now, as I have to give a connected account of it some time next year, mainly, I confess, in order to recoup myself the pecuniary drain I had to

* On October 28, 1890.

bear during the last six months. I hope England will pay for the account.

"'But there is one remark of which I wish to unburthen myself at once; and that is that the more I have seen of England, and of Europe generally, the more confirmed have I been in my impression that, with all their faults, our English rulers are the good Providence of India. Take, for instance, the railways, amongst other public works. From what I have seen of the working of some of these I feel ashamed of the stupid and spiteful things I have sometimes said of the management of our State-managed railways in India. This remark applies to several other branches of public life. How much I wish my countrymen travelled more freely, and, what is of still more importance, they studied history, modern and ancient, with a tithe of the zeal they devote to barren rhetoric or still more barren speculation! "History, history, travel"—these are the words I should place constantly before the rising generation. For our political reformers, especially, a love of history and travel is the first essential.'

"And now as to the subject nearest your heart?

"THE SUBJECT PROPER.

"'There you probe a sore point. But I must not flinch. Of course, my mission, as you have been pleased to call it, has entailed a heavy outlay, almost a pound for the rupee I need have spent in India. In that huge and ever busy metropolis of yours there is small chance for a worker to rise if once he allows himself to sink for want of what the Persians call the "oil of business." The cost of postage was about equal

to that of printing—each an enormous item for a poor man, and exceeded by cab-hire, railway-fare, &c. And never in my life had I to work so hard and so anxiously as during these three months. It was a perpetual round of work and worry. To obtain some of the names for our committee was no pastime, I assure you; they took weeks of correspondence, discussion, appeal, and entreaty. You will see what conflicting elements I have gathered in—men and women of all creeds and of varying shades of opinion, such as probably have never been reconciled before. Here is a miscellaneous company of the high and mighty of England, with a strong contingent of perhaps the best Anglo-Indians living, and the bulk of the Congress committee. I had an important *political* object in view, besides the immediate object. I am very proud of the committee, and do not grudge it the expense and effort it cost. It is not everybody who can thus spend the slowly-acquired influence of twenty years, of a lifetime almost, in a few weeks. In this respect I am very fortunate.'

"THE POINTS AT ISSUE.

"But, judging from results, you seem to have been well rewarded?

"'Certainly. I have cause to be profoundly thankful. At first it was very up-hill work to get at the right sort of supporters, the old superstition about "religion" being still prevalent in most quarters. I saw this rock ahead at a glance, and determined not to knock my head against it. I divested my proposals of all "religious" or "social" complexion, confining myself entirely to the anomalies and absurdities of British-made laws in India as bearing on the relations between the sexes, and to an exposition

of the doctrine of false neutrality the Government had been led into adopting. Here I would repeat once more what I have said a hundred times over, namely, that my proposals have nothing to do with religious, social, or domestic reform as such. They simply deal with some of the defects of their own laws and policy, for which the British Government in India are responsible. It has been the one war-cry of the anti-reform party that a foreign Government should not interfere with the domestic concerns of our people. I say *Amen.* Thank you very much, gentlemen, for deprecating foreign interference. We go with you. So far reformers and anti-reformers now occupy the same platform. Government ought to rejoice at this combination of forces.'

"THE PROTECTED AGE.

"'Let us now look at the proposals themselves. (1) As regards the protected age being raised to at least twelve. There was practically no objection that I could find in England. On the contrary, some of the most competent authorities, and English ladies generally, demanded a larger increase. Poor Phulmani's martyrdom facilitated my negotiations with some of the more influential supporters, who once thought it was impossible for such a case to arise. They were shocked by the reports of the occurrence, and this revulsion of feeling led to an easy victory for us. In India I do not think there can be two opinions about the question now. The old argument about the interference of the police, and so on, is suicidal for our few remaining opponents. As a Bengali friend pointed out the other day, if there was no police interference when the age stood at ten, there ought to be less than none of the danger apprehended

when the age is raised to twelve. The other argument, that the average for completion of marriage in India is sixteen, is equally suicidal. If that age is sixteen, why object to the protected age being raised to twelve, or for that matter to fourteen? As a matter of experience, however, the average age for completion of marriage amongst Hindus stands below fourteen. Is it too much, then, to fix the protected age at twelve in the case of husbands and thirteen in the case of strangers? This is Sir W. Hunter's proposal, and Sir William is just now a demi-god with some of our juvenile critics, though he is not likely to remain that for a month.'

"THE RESTITUTION OF CONJUGAL RIGHTS.

"'As regards this proposal also I heard not a single dissentient voice in England, once the case was fairly stated. Some of the very friends of that hateful importation disowned it, and agreed to have the coercive process abolished without further delay. We need not dilate on the merits of this simple proposal.'

"INFANT MARRIAGES.

"'The proposal regarding arrangements for infant marriages is apt to be misunderstood. Let the critic be so good as to remember that my appeal was addressed to the British public and the British authorities, and directed, not against the religious or social customs of the people of India, as I have repeatedly shown, but against the share which the "neutral" British Government in India have had in aggravating the lot of the victims of those customs, by legally recognizing and enforcing those customs on the weaker sex, while yet professing a policy of non-interference. This being so, and my position

forcing me to be logical with an intelligent and well-informed audience, I was bound to submit that the "neutral" Government ought at least to decline to have anything to do with the results of unnatural social arrangements, leaving the parties to caste arbitration so long as the arbiters did not appeal to "the arm of flesh." My first object was to pin the Government of India to their own declared policy of neutrality. To be practical I had to add that as a foreign Government could not prohibit infant marriages, let them by all means permit such marriages to be contracted at any age, subject only to ratification before the parties coming of age. A draft of this proposal was discussed with eminent jurists. The revered Catholic prelate, Cardinal Manning, declared that infant marriages were not quite unknown in England, and that though the Catholics, like the Hindus, considered marriage to be a sacrament, still they had always accepted the limitation I now sought to secure. His Eminence added that he would do just the same to-day if such a case arose, and that he could not see why this should not be followed in India. Much the same view was taken of the proposal by Mr. Herbert Spencer, the great apostle of the *laissez faire* school. He fully, and perhaps more than fully, appreciated the difficulties of the Government in India, and made every possible excuse for them. But he could not resist agreeing with me, after all, that Government might decline to recognize infant marriages. Added to these distinguished names we had ex-viceroys, lawmakers, historians, and others, to approve of the proposal generally. So, you see, I was not in bad company. In India I have a few Hindus of the highest position favouring this view. Still, if there are others

who think I am carrying them too fast, it is open to them to correct and control me. My only object is to serve them. Let them put their heads together and evolve a better scheme of their own. They might perhaps define an "infant marriage" to be a marriage not under twelve but under ten, as an eminent ex-viceroy suggested to me. They know as well as I do that my attack is aimed not at reasonably early marriages, but against those parodies of the marriage rite at three and five and seven, so utterly indefensible and fraught with such terrible mischief. The critics will already have seen that my proposal was the groundwork on which the resolution at Mrs. Jeune's meeting was based. Let Hindu leaders improve upon that resolution, if they can. I am not at all particular as to whose proposal is finally adopted, so that some action is taken in time. But if they sit quiet, or talk at random, it will avail them little. How long is the British Government going to be made a cat's-paw of? Let them be assured the British public will not allow matters to drift like this. Government will have no excuse for the attitude they have hitherto been led into maintaining. They will have to vindicate their position as a "neutral" Government by adopting a policy of righteous neutrality. If our Hindu friends co-operate with Government, it will be all the better for themselves. It will, besides, have a marvellously good effect on public opinion in England, as Lord Ripon said in one of his letters three years ago. If Hindu friends do not co-operate, Government may have to take their own course.

"'Let me tell my Hindu brethren frankly that the object with which I have framed this proposal is threefold; firstly, to discourage baby marriages, secondly, to leave the

parties free in cases of extreme need, and, thirdly, to save infant wives from the status of widowhood. Is it too much for such an object to ask that the "neutral" British Government shall remain neutral; in fact, that they shall neither prohibit nor recognize infant marriages? Of course, I would give timely notice of the change of policy.'

"THE OTHER PROPOSALS.

"'All that I need to say about the Widow Marriage Act is that Government be just and consistent. It is their own business. The other proposals, about an Enabling Act, about rigorously enforcing the provisions of the Penal Code against the disposal of minors for unworthy purposes, about helping voluntary associations for social reform, &c., are harmless enough.'

"A WORD WITH HINDU FRIENDS.

"'What, then, becomes of the "revolution" which a certain meddlesome villain is going to bring about? Is it not idle for intelligent men to assume that because female children are not to be married in infancy, therefore they will never at all be married? Why, if all the Hindu fathers agree to delay parting with their girls for a few years, the prospective husbands will only have to wait. They are not going to marry outside the pale of Hinduism, poor little schoolboys! Where, on earth, is the threatened disorganization of society? The critic who fears "demoralization," if *infant marriages* are discouraged, appears to me to be guilty of a heartless and senseless libel upon his own children. Not the worst of our enemies can say that Indian children of nine or ten are likely to go wrong if left unmarried at that age. And yet there are Hindu fathers and brothers who are not ashamed of this talk of

"demoralization." It is very hard to bear the injustice done me by this class of critics, harder still because the injustice recoils upon the country. When these writers call me ignorant, revolutionary, Europeanized, and that, do they know what harm they are doing to themselves, besides the obvious injustice done to a friend? But in their hearts they know that I am much better informed than they are themselves ever likely to be. They also know that I am quite the reverse of revolutionary. If my proposals were revolutionary, would responsible Anglo-Indians of the highest rank have favoured them? Would members of the Congress Committee have joined us with alacrity? Would Sir W. Wedderburn, for instance, the most ardent of our political advocates, have accepted them as "extremely moderate and reasonable?" Again, if I thought of myself and my own hobbies, why did I set my face against tempting offers of a battle on the floor of the House of Commons and a campaign throughout Great Britain, with myself as the hero of the hour? Why did I decline pecuniary co-operation and implored my friends in England not to embarrass the Government out here? It cost me an immense effort to keep the lions of reform in hand. Two or three of the lionesses actually told me to my face that I seemed to be in love with the Government of India—"and such a Government," said one of them, with ineffable contempt, of which I was perhaps more a subject than that luckless Government. A repetition of the anti-Abkari or the anti-C. D. Acts tactics was not at all difficult; and I had nothing to fear from this Government or that party. But I have an almost morbid dread of moving the Government suddenly, or of springing a mine under the feet of Society. Once the huge machinery of State is set in motion, there is no know-

ing when it may stop. I have never been, and never shall be, a party to precipitate action. But if ever such action comes to be taken, my critics will have to thank themselves mainly for it. What with taunts and pressure from home, and disingenuous obstruction in India, the elephant of State may be goaded into action any moment. We know what an angry elephant can do or undo. Let our friends, the critics, have care.

" 'But I must not detain you longer. I am grateful for your support, and pray that your wise and disinterested counsels may prevail. As to myself, I know that the most modest of our programmes will be opposed in some quarters till we are able to carry the day. Once the authorities make up their minds, our opponents will accept the situation, I believe, with thankfulness. It has been so always, and will be so. There are hundreds of these opponents who in their hearts bless our efforts and wish them god-speed; for they are wise enough to know, whatever their pride of exclusiveness, that it is on the success of these efforts, more than of any others, that the growth of national strength depends—that national strength which has been drained away by centuries of licensed profligacy on the part of monopolists of one sex defiling what is highest and holiest in the other. Some Hindus are fond of reminding me that marriage with them is a sacrament, and not a contract. As if I did not know! Marriage being a sacrament, it is greater shame to them that they should bring the sacred estate of matrimony to this pass. Marriage is undoubtedly a sacrament. But whoever enjoined it to be performed on babes, to be ever after the victims of the most cruel wrong that could possibly be inflicted on a nation and its individual members?' "

Shortly after his return, Malabari had a meeting of representative Hindus at the Hon. Mr. Telang's. The four resolutions were fully discussed there, and the meeting finally agreed that Government should be asked to raise the protected age from ten to twelve, and to abolish imprisonment in execution of restitution decrees. As regards the second resolution, they thought it would be better to prevent marriages under a certain age rather than enact a law on the lines of the resolution; and as regards the fourth resolution they said that the law allowing an unchaste widow to retain her husband's property, but depriving a chaste re-married widow of such property, was anomalous, and should be amended.

Some of the ablest men in Bombay had taken part at this meeting, and many others had approved its conclusions. These men did their utmost to strengthen the hands of Government when, in January last, a Bill was introduced by Sir A. Scoble to raise the protected age to twelve. For instance, the Hon. Mr. Justice Telang and Dr. Bhandarkar showed clearly that the Hindu Shastras

were not opposed to the measure, while Mr. N. G. Chandavarkar proved, from the history of Indian legislation, that Government had numerous precedents in its support. The Hon. Mr. Zaverilal Umiashankar presided at a very important meeting in Bombay, at which the Bill was generally approved, and he enumerated several facts which established that the *Garbhadhan* * ceremony was unknown in many parts of India.

In the Supreme Legislative Council, our Bombay member, the Hon. Mr. Nulkar, of whom we are justly proud, took up from the very first a position which did honour both to his head and to his heart; and he maintained it to the last by irrefragable arguments and unquestionable facts. It is too early yet to write a history of the agitation which preceded the Bill and which followed it. Suffice it to say, that just as the Ilbert Bill effected a

* This word was given different meanings in the controversy. Its literal meaning is "placing the embryo." Some argued that the Hindu Shastras having enjoined Garbhadhan as a sacrament, it was to be performed as soon as a child-wife attained a certain well-known physical condition, irrespectively of her age or physical fitness. Others argued that abstinence was enjoined for a certain period after the attainment of the said condition, and that Garbhadhan was a "conception" ceremony, and not a "consummation" ceremony.

momentous political awakening throughout India, so the Scoble Bill effected a momentous social awakening and upheaval. Throughout the agitation Bombay did her part nobly and well, and her sister Presidency in the South stood by her at this juncture. It was only in the Bengal Presidency that the Bill was violently opposed. But even there some of the very best men were in favour of it. The Panjaub and the North-West provinces, of course, had no objection to the Bill, as consummation with child-wives under twelve was almost unknown among their people, especially the former.

The first item of the Bombay programme has thus been accepted by the Legislature. His Excellency the Viceroy has also given a pledge that a provision would be introduced, leaving it to the discretion of the courts to award imprisonment in execution of restitution decrees; and therefore the second item also may be said to have been practically accepted. The third, in connection with re-married widows, remains yet to be dealt with. But it is a question not altogether so free from difficulties as may at first sight be imagined.

The Legislature has, on the whole, done its duty. It now rests with the party of reform to show what stuff they are made of. They must show that they can make sacrifices, and they must learn to sink their differences for the sake of the common weal.

What is the moral of Malabari's crusade? It is that earnestness, like faith, can move mountains, though not in company with high Sanskrit scholarship or scientific or philosophic acquirements; that there is wisdom in guiding and utilizing such earnestness, but crass folly in allowing it to spend itself in vain, if it can ever be in vain. No one can say that Malabari's exertions have been futile or fruitless. He has succeeded in engaging the sympathies of the ruling class in favour of Hindu widows, and against the practice of infant marriages. He is not an iconoclast or a revolutionary patriot. He has never advocated coercion of any kind, contenting himself always with what he describes as co-operation between leaders of Society and the State. Even as regards the amended law on the Age of Consent he has scrupulously refrained from suggesting police interference; on the con-

trary, he has expressed his thankfulness more than once at the powers of the police and the magistracy having been reduced to a minimum. No one could be more gratified than Malabari to see that the revised law is, in this respect, more elastic than the one it supersedes. He is not for introducing European customs wholesale, and has repeatedly stated that by infant marriage he means only the marriage of children under twelve, and that he would be quite satisfied if this modest reform could be carried out. It may be that in certain parts of India no such reform is required, though that remains to be proved. But then, the educated men of these parts should be the last to say that, because it is not required among them, it is not required elsewhere. One of the most disappointing features of the opinions given to Government is such fallacious generalization. Educated natives have had some hard hits at Malabari's hand. But they should remember that their treatment of him was not generous or just. I am myself, I am afraid, generalizing wrongly when I say that educated natives have been ungenerous or unjust to him. I believe that no edu-

cated Hindu in his senses can fail to perceive the single-heartedness and the conspicuous ability with which his Aryan cousin has launched this scheme of social reform, and I believe that, excepting a few noisy and irresponsible editors, the bulk of educated men are on the side of such reform, however they may differ as to the ways and means. Malabari is not a man who would desist from doing what he feels is his life-work, simply because of unpopularity, and it would be a thousand pities if his agitation were not kept up. Our educated countrymen ought now to form themselves into a strong organized Social Reform Association, or start a Mission with the necessary propaganda. The eyes of our rulers and of the ruling race, and I may say, of civilized people generally, are upon them. They at first thought of achieving political progress and then trying their hand at religious and social reform. But by this time they ought to see that social reform will no longer wait upon their sweet pleasure, that they are challenged on all sides to show themselves worthy of higher political rights by adopting more natural and enlightened social customs, and

that the advice of their best friends—men like Lord Ripon, Mr. Wordsworth, and others—is to the same effect. If Malabari has done them any wrong, they ought to show they can forgive him. We ought to rise above petty spite, envy, and jealousy, and ought to band ourselves in the holy spirit of self-sacrifice to do our utmost to bring about the social regeneration of India, remembering that our fathers in the days of our grand epics knew of no such "anthropological curiosities" as baby-brides and virgin-widows, and that the reform sought for is, after all, a mere return to the customs which prevailed in the palmy days of Aryan India.

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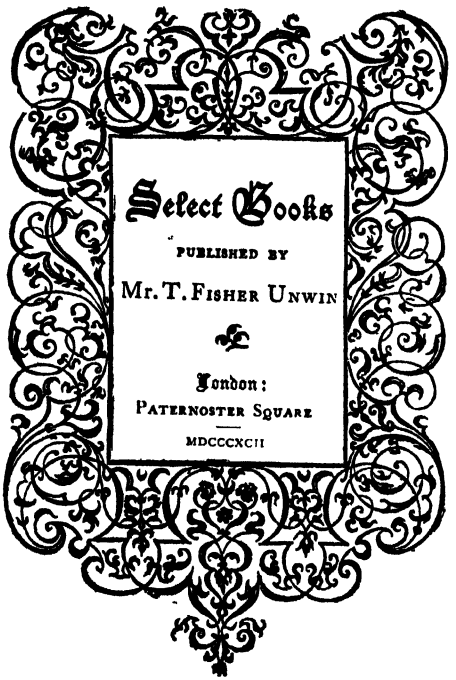
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